# *Formative Evaluation of the Official Language Minority Communities Support Fund*

**Evaluation Report**

*Audit and Evaluation*
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*Note: In this document, the masculine denotes both genders and is used solely to facilitate reading of the text.*

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# *Executive Summary*

## Purpose and Context of the Evaluation

This report presents the results of the evaluation of the Official Language Minority Communities Support Fund. The Fund is administered by the Secretariat, Official Language Minority Communities (SOLMC) of the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC, formerly HRDC) and is one of the methods used by HRSDC to implement section 41 of the Part VII of the *Official Languages Act.*[1]

The Fund is provided as a Labour Market Partnership (LMP) initiative under the Part II Employment Benefits and Support Measures (EBSM) of the *Employment Insurance Act*. It was launched on June 12, 1999 and allocated $21 million over a three-year period. On March 19, 2002, HRSDC announced a two-year extension of the Fund with a budget of $12 million per year for that period.

The Support Fund is implemented through two national committees:

- the National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development (referred to in this report as the Francophone Committee), and
- the National Human Resources Development Committee for the English Linguistic Minority (referred to in this report as the Anglophone Committee).

The two national committees implement their strategic plans with the help of the Regroupements de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉEs) and the Community Economic Development and Employability Committees (CEDECs).

The Support Fund assists the two national committees and their delegated organizations[2] in their efforts to foster economic development, employability and capacity building within Canada's Official Language Minority Communities. The Fund provides financial assistance through contribution agreements.

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[1] Under section 41, Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*, the Federal Government is committed to: "Enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting their development, as well as fostering full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society".

[2] The delegated organizations refer to the organizations authorized to present funding applications and to sign contribution agreements under the Support Fund and include: the community table of the Francophone Committee; the community table of the Anglophone Committee; the Regroupements de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉEs) and the Community Economic Development and Employability Committees (CEDECs). The Francophone and Anglophone Committees are charged with providing advice on the policies, programs and services of HRSDC and other federal partners. They perform a number of essential coordination, information, liaison, research, and development functions. The CEDECs, funded through the Anglophone Committee, motivate Anglophone minority communities in the areas of community capacity building and community economic development. The RDÉEs sign and implement contribution agreements that are aligned with the strategic plans of the Francophone Committee.

The evaluation of the Support Fund was conducted during the winter and spring of 2002 and covers the period from the launch of the Fund in 1999 until January 2002.

The evaluation's mandate was focused on three main areas:

- determine the relevance of the Support Fund in light of the needs of Official Language Minority Communities, the mandate and the responsibilities of HRSDC;
- examine the design, delivery and implementation of the Support Fund; and
- examine the achievement of the short and medium-term objectives and determine the key results.

This formative evaluation did not cover the long-term impacts of the Fund. These impacts include, among others, economic development, job creation and community capacity building.

## Methodology

Four main data collection methods were used:

- a review of documentation, including the Support Fund documentation and publications of HRSDC, Federal departments and the two national committees;
- an analysis of the files of the first 18 contribution agreements;
- interviews with 46 key informants, including managers of the SOLMC, members of the two national committees, the RDÉEs, RDÉE partners, the CEDECs, and some HRSDC regional coordinators responsible for the implementation of section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*; and
- a written questionnaire administered to 153 members of the two national committees, the RDÉEs, RDÉE partners, and the CEDECs.

The approach used for the evaluation emphasized the use of multiple lines of evidence. Particular care was placed on ensuring that the data collected under the four data collection methods were comparable and complementary so that the findings from one source could be informed, corroborated or further explored by the other sources. Although the research design relied heavily on qualitative methodologies, the evaluation emphasized the systematic analysis of these data and used qualitative findings in concert with quantitative and concrete evidence where possible to increase confidence in the main findings.

The evaluation used thirteen performance indicators to examine the Support Fund. These indicators were grouped according to the main evaluation issues:

- the relevance and design of the Support Fund;
- implementation and delivery; and

- preliminary results and enabling effects[3] of the Support Fund.

## Evaluation Findings and Conclusions

The main findings and conclusions are summarized below:

### *Relevance and Design of the Support Fund*

**The Support Fund is consistent with part VII of the *Official Languages Act***

The analysis of the key informant interviews and documentation related to the Support Fund indicates that the Support Fund is conceptually consistent with section 41 of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*. The Fund provides a means for HRSDC to meet its responsibilities under Part VII, relating to enhancing the vitality and the development of Official Language Minority Communities.

The documentation review and interviews also indicate that concepts, approaches and mechanisms related to the functioning of the Support Fund and the two national committees were used as models by Health Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

**Consultation with Official Language Minority Communities has ensured the relevance of the Support Fund to these communities**

The documentation review, events leading up to the creation of the Support Fund and the interviews with community representatives demonstrate that the Support Fund is the result of significant consultation between the Francophone communities and HRSDC. The Anglophone community in Quebec and other federal institutions joined the consultative process more recently and have broadened the scope and relevance of the Support Fund.

**A dichotomy exists between the Support Fund objectives and its funding source**

The Support Fund is an LMP initiative under the EBSM. This means that the contribution agreements signed under the Support Fund must comply with the terms and conditions of the EBSM. Comparing the objectives of the EBSM to the objectives of the Support Fund indicates a dichotomy between their objectives, however, especially with respect to economic development. This conclusion is corroborated by the analysis of documentation and the interviews.

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[3] Enabling effects refer to all policies, programs, interventions or investments that will contribute to the development or perfecting of the institutional infrastructure of communities, and any instrument that will enable them to take control of and generate sustainable community economic growth, including the definition of development strategies, the mobilizing of the key human and entrepreneurial resources of communities, the improvement of employability for their members, the creation of jobs, the creation or enhancement of cooperatives, strategic and business partnerships, and, gradually, the assembling of a critical mass of capital.

In fact, the objective of the EBSM is to assist individuals to prepare for, obtain and maintain employment, resulting in savings to the EI Account. As part of this overall objective, LMP initiatives enable organizations to identify their human resources needs and develop plans to address these needs. These partnerships can also be used to implement workforce adjustment measures. The objectives of the Support Fund are economic development, employability and community capacity building.

**The delegated organizations are in a situation of uncertainty**

The absence of longer-term funding and the dichotomy between the objectives of the Support Fund and the EBSM are contributing to a situation of uncertainty for the delegated organizations, because the viability of these organizations and the scope of their actions are generally considered to be closely linked to the Support Fund. The uncertainty is also contributing to staff turnover and re-training.

**The Francophone Committee's strategic plan is consistent with the mandate and objectives of the Support Fund, but it is less evident that the Anglophone Committee's strategic plan is consistent**

The analysis of documentation, the contribution agreement files, and key informant interviews confirms that the strategic plan, priorities and directions of the Francophone Committee are consistent with the mandate and objectives of the Support Fund. In the case of the Anglophone Committee, there is a greater focus on community capacity building, community economic development and less focus on the economic development objective of the Support Fund. The key informant interviews, publications and contribution agreements files of the Anglophone Committee indicated a very diverse range of activities that were poorly targeted and difficult to reconcile with the concept of community economic development. A very broad interpretation was given to the concept of "community capacity building", including that of creating and eventually establishing the conditions essential to community economic development. However, some activities of the Anglophone Committee do fall more clearly into the category of community economic development.

Part of the reason for the different direction of the Anglophone Committee may be that the Support Fund was initially designed around the specific needs of Francophone Official Language Minority Communities and their needs may differ from those of Anglophone Official Language Minority Communities.

**The Support Fund has, to some extent, mechanisms in place to minimise duplication with other federal initiatives and to complement other sources of funds**

The interviews and documentation review indicated that the Support Fund has mechanisms in place to minimise duplication with other federal initiatives and to complement other sources of funds. The Fund was designed to complement existing programs, to encourage partnerships and to minimize the possibility of duplication of funds. One of the roles of the members of the review committee is to ensure that planned contribution agreements would not duplicate or replace other programs. Also, the approval of contribution agreements requires the identification of all funding sources.

## Delivery and Implementation

**The Support Fund has helped to establish a national infrastructure that is consistent with its objectives**

The existence and operation of a national infrastructure consisting of the two national committees, the RDÉEs and the CEDECs is consistent with the Support Fund's short-term objectives of strengthening and establishing partnership networks, and supporting the Francophone and Anglophone Committees.

**The management of the Support Fund could be improved in certain areas, such as monitoring and data collection systems**

The SOLMC developed a Results-based Management and Accountability Framework in April 2001. The framework included performance indicators that are associated with the Support Fund objectives. The contribution agreements examined by this evaluation were signed prior to April 2001. Although the contribution agreement files included a list of expected results, there was a wide variation in terms of specificity. Also, the expected results were not linked to performance indicators. Only a minority of files describes the expected results with enough precision to link them to performance indicators.

The interviews with the delegated organizations, the review of the Support Fund Results-based Management and Accountability Framework and the contribution agreement files also indicated that the SOLMC has not set out clear and measurable objectives and that the SOLMC and delegated organizations have not been making use of performance indicators. In addition, the activity reports produced by the delegated organizations were found to be of marginal value because their purpose, uses and content have not been adequately specified.

The SOLMC and the national committees have not developed an integrated data collection system. Other than the contribution agreement files, the SOLMC does not appear to have a data collection tool.

## Preliminary Results and Enabling Effects of the Support Fund

**A high level of achievement towards establishing a supporting infrastructure was evident under the first 18 contribution agreements.**

Examples of achievements include the establishment of the RDÉEs and CEDECs and the development of strategic planning.

In several regions, some short-term accomplishments in the areas of tourism and support for business development have been reported, which may be effective in helping to achieve the long term objectives of the Support Fund. Specific examples include creating a business incubator in Manitoba and, in British Columbia, the provincial Department of

Tourism has incorporated a series of tourism promotion products developed by the RDÉE into its own tourism promotion program.

**There is preliminary evidence that the Support Fund is helping to mobilize communities and increase community capacity for economic development and employment.**

The strategic plans developed by the delegated organizations, the related activities and interviews with stakeholders indicate that the Support Fund is helping to mobilize communities. Respondents to the written questionnaire indicated that they believe that the Support Fund has been or will be highly effective in making progress in economic development and employability that would not otherwise have been possible.

**There is preliminary evidence that the Support Fund is leveraging complementary funding and activities to implement strategic plans**

The preliminary evidence indicates that the Support Fund is leveraging additional funding and activities by third parties, including federal, provincial and private investors. Two examples are Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Agriculture Rural Minority Language Community Planning Initiative and the business incubator in Manitoba.

**There is room for increased involvement of federal departments and agencies who are members of the Francophone and Anglophone Committees**

Key Informants, particularly those from the delegated organizations, indicated that there is room for more involvement by federal institutions in terms of adapting their policies, programs and services to the economic development and employability needs of Official Language Minority Communities.

**Knowledge of the local labour market needs to be developed**

The interviews with members of the delegated organizations and the absence of community diagnosis and workforce data suggest that the delegated organizations have only a partial and uneven understanding of the needs of the local workforce and labour market and that some of these organizations need to develop a better knowledge in these areas.

# *Management Response*

## Introduction

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) plays a key role in the development of Official Language Minority Communities. In setting up the Secretariat, Official Language Minority Communities and its Support Fund, HRSDC has demonstrated its commitment towards implementing section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*.

The SOLMC has examined the formative evaluation carried out by the Audit and Evaluation Directorate and endorses the results.

## Main Observation

The evaluation shows that progress has been achieved in three years. The Support Fund enabled the Comité national de développement des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne (referred to as the Francophone Committee) and the National Human Resources Development Committee for the English Linguistic Minority (referred to as the Anglophone Committee) to establish from the ground up a network of delegated organizations, the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDEEs) and the Community Economic Development and Employability Committees (CEDECs) throughout the country which allows them to implement their strategic plans. The Official Language Minority Communities did not have these infrastructures and capacities prior to 1999.

The evaluation emphasizes the relevance of the Support Fund and its consistency with section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*. The document also makes a number of positive observations, such as the establishment of a Canada-wide infrastructure and the multiplying and leveraging effects in terms of investment and partnerships.

It notes, however, there is a dichotomy between the mandate/objectives of the Support Fund and those of the Employment Benefits and Support Measures (EBSM), its funding source, especially with respect to economic development.

The evaluation mentions some early signs that the Support Fund is beginning to mobilize communities and build their capacities in terms of economic growth and employability.

It also shows that a number of systems still need to be put in place and some adjustments made to the administration of the Support Fund, including data collection, the development of a comprehensive framework of performance indicators and a better knowledge of the needs of the local labour market of the communities.

**O: Observation - A: action planned**

### Relevance and Design of the Support Fund

**O 1:** *The ad hoc nature of the commitment to the Support Fund places the delegated organizations in a situation of uncertainty.*

**A 1:** The Department recognizes that the temporary nature of the funding creates a climate of uncertainty within the delegated organizations.

In order to ensure long-term funding, SOLMC has developed a three-pronged strategy: (1) make use of Labour Market Partnership (LMP) in the short term; (2) search for additional, complementary funding sources to finance objectives, activities and expenditures that do not meet the LMP eligibility criteria but fall within the Department's mandate; and (3) seek for a government long term funding solution.

HRSDC is working with other federal partners to seek authorities for long term funding mechanisms and program delivery models that take into account all the human resources, economic development and community capacity-building issues facing Official Language Minority Communities.

In this way, HRSDC endeavours to solidify its commitment to the Anglophone and Francophone minority communities and ensure the sustainability of the delegated organizations.

**O 2:** *There is a lack of symmetry between the mandate/objectives of the Support Fund and those of the Employment Benefits and Support Measures, especially in terms of economic development.*

**A 2:** SOLMC agrees with this observation.

HRSDC is working with federal partners to seek long term authorities to establish program delivery models that take into account all the human resources, economic development and community capacity-building issues facing Official Language Minority Communities. Activities of the minority communities were limited to those meeting the LMP Terms and Conditions up to October 1, 2004. Since that time HRSDC has obtained authorities to implement new terms and conditions and Consolidated Revenue Fund funding until March 31st, 2005. These new authorities close the gap between the mandate objectives of the Support Fund and the activities the department can financially support. The lack of symmetry issue is thus fully resolved in the short term.

**O 3:** *The alignment of the Anglophone National Committee's strategic and action plans, on the one hand, with the mandate of the Support Fund, on the other, is less clear.*

**A 3:** The Anglophone Community Table has developed a strategic plan designed to position the Anglophone community in terms of the major trends in community economic development and employability. The Anglophone National Committee has acted on a number of fronts to strengthen the community capacity of English communities in Quebec. In April and May 2003, the SOLMC held two information sessions with the representatives of the Anglophone National Committee to raise their awareness of how to put the LMP to better use in pursuing their strategic priorities. Furthermore, the authorities sought for fiscal year 2004-2005 will ensure better support for the community capacity-building work undertaken by the Anglophone National Committee as part of its strategic planning. Finally, any solutions explored in order to provide a long-term government solution will take into account the differing needs of the two communities and their respective planning.

**Implementation and Management of the Support Fund**

**O 4:** *Certain respondents are concerned about the consistency of information provided by the SOLMC.*

**A 4:** The inconsistency of information is to a large degree attributable to high staff turnover. The short term nature of the program funding has not allowed establishing permanent positions for the Support Fund during the period covered by the evaluation. Since that time, the Department has authorized the SOLMC to hire indeterminate staff. Over time, this will diminish the instability and high staff turnover. Furthermore, sponsor guides and enhanced staff training should also contribute to improved consistency of information.

**O 5:** *The lack of clarity around the criteria and the procedure for processing funding applications creates problems.*

**A 5:** A *Guide to the Funding Application* was developed in January 2001, revised in the fall of 2002 and distributed to the entire network.

The SOLMC also developed criteria for prioritizing the funding applications and, as part of the LMP orientation sessions held in April and May 2003, distributed a checklist for evaluating proposals to ensure a clear understanding of the terms and conditions of the LMP and of the application approval procedures.

On the question of application processing, on February 16, 2004, the Employment Programs Branch implemented directives dealing with the separation of duties in the life cycle of grants and contributions projects, the use of internal review committees and the introduction of enhanced financial controls/mandatory audit clause. The Support Fund is governed by those directives and the SOLMC will inform the network partners of them. The new directives will clarify the criteria and procedure for processing funding applications and the process itself will become more streamlined and efficient.

**O 6:** *Some regional co-ordinators and other members of the review committees do not adequately understand the Support Fund or their role in the process of reviewing contribution applications. This limits the reliability of their recommendations and their contribution to decision-making.*

**A 6:** A communication strategy has already been implemented to address this observation. In particular, SOLMC has communicated with departments of the Government Table to confirm their review role which is to avoid any overlap or duplication in the funding of projects and to ensure optimal use of public funds. Support

Fund officers have also met with many HRSDC officers in the field during regional travel to discuss their role. In addition, information on the program has been distributed at the Department's annual meetings of official language representatives.

Should a new program delivery model be introduced, the need to involve a review committee will be assessed. Such a committee could include representatives from local and regional offices and from departments and organizations members of the network. If the need to maintain the contribution application evaluation process is demonstrated, the SOLMC will develop and implement a communication strategy describing the new mandate and responsibilities of the review committee members in the context of the new program.

**O 7:** *The SOLMC has not provided a functional and operational definition of what an enabling fund is.*

**A 7:** SOLMC will provide a functional and operational definition of what is an enabling fund for Official Language Minority Communities which will build on the implicit definition that can be inferred from how the Support Fund is used. It implies that the Fund generates spill-over effects that contribute to community progress. With the funding granted to support the implementation of the Official Language Minority Communities strategic plan, the delegated organizations have leverage to approach potential partners and rally government, financial and community stakeholders, thus accessing other funding sources in order to achieve projects in their communities and ensure their viability.

As an example, the Agricultural Rural Minority Language Community Planning Initiative clearly shows the growth-generating effect and positive impact of the Support Fund. Under this initiative, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Canadian Heritage invested $2 million to assist agricultural rural minority language communities in building a consensus on development options that draw on the community assets and balance economic, social and environmental objectives. At the same time, some sixty communities acquired a community-planning tool.

**O 8:** *The delegated organizations have only a partial and unequal understanding of the needs of the workforce and of the labour market and, for some, work still needs to be done in this area.*

*Training and experience within the delegated organizations are lacking.*

**A 8:** In preparation for developing a more definitive approach in supporting Official Language Minority Communities, the delegated agencies will be requested, over the short term, to conduct studies and implement projects that identify community assets, needs and opportunities with regard to human resources and labour market planning. This work will permit the acquisition of capacities for community planning of human resources.

The SOLMC will assist community representatives to develop community profile template by providing guidance and training sessions.

**O 9:** *The SOLMC has not set clear, measurable objectives and does not use performance indicators in administering the program.*

*The SOLMC and the national committees have not developed an integrated data collection system to facilitate the documentation and analysis of progress toward the achievement of the Support Fund's objectives.*

*The delegated organizations produce activity reports of marginal value.*

**A 9:** The lack of performance indicators for the Support Fund and data on the current situation of Official Language Minority Communities means that targeted data on program performance cannot be collected.

In the short term, SOLMC will ask the delegated organizations to develop community profiles that provide quantitative and qualitative data on the current socio-economic situation of the Official Language Minority Communities.

It will also consult with the national committees and delegated organizations to develop performance indicators and put a reporting structure into place that combine the Support Fund objectives with those of the strategic directions of both national committees and community plans.

In the context of the implementation of a long-term government solution that takes into account any human resources, economic development and community capacity-building issues facing Official Language Minority Communities, HRSDC will introduce a Results-based Management and Accountability Framework that includes performance indicators and reporting mechanisms dependent on the mandate of the new initiative.

**Results and Structuring Effects of the Support Fund**

**O 10:** *The infrastructure created under the Support Fund has had varying degrees of success in translating the strategic plans of the delegated organizations into sustainable and measurable results in the field.*

**A 10:** SOLMC agrees with this observation. It should, however, be noted that the delegated organizations did not all come into being at the same time and the reality of minority communities is that they have specific characteristics that vary by region, province and territory. Certain delegated organizations have a support structure extending beyond federal departments, while others do not even have access to funding from regional economic development agencies.

Given the variety of resources available to the communities, the challenges facing the Department requires it to adopt an asymmetrical approach, while keeping in mind the strategic planning of the two networks and the best interests of each. The Department will continue to work directly with stakeholders from the two networks to assist them in understanding the program requirements and ensure training and renewal within the delegated organizations.

**O 11:** *There is still much to be done by federal institutions in terms of adapting their policies, programs and services to the economic development and employability needs of Official Language Minority Communities.*

**A 11:** HRSDC is committed to find ways to optimize the involvement of other departments and organizations.

HRSDC is seeking their full engagement in bringing recommendations that will address the human resources and the economic development of the Official Language Minority Communities.

The implementation of the Governmental Action Plan for Official Languages also creates an environment favourable to the development of new interdepartmental partnerships.

# *1. Introduction*

## 1.1 Purpose and Context of the Evaluation

This report presents the results of the evaluation of the Official Language Minority Communities Support Fund administered by the Secretariat, Official Language Minority Communities (SOLMC) of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC).

The Support Fund is provided as a Labour Market Partnership (LMP) initiative under the Part II Employment Benefits and Support Measures (EBSM) of the *Employment Insurance (EI) Act*. The Fund was launched on June 12, 1999 and allocated $21 million over a three-year period. On March 19, 2002, HRSDC announced a two-year extension of the Fund with a budget of $12 million per year for that period.

The evaluation was conducted during the winter and spring of 2002 and covers the period from June 12, 1999 until January 2002.[4] The evaluation's mandate was focused on three main areas:

- determine the relevance of the Support Fund in light of the needs of Official Language Minority Communities, the mandate and the responsibilities of HRSDC;
- examine the design, delivery and implementation of the Support Fund; and
- examine the achievement of the short and medium-term objectives and determine the key results.

This formative evaluation did not cover the long-term impacts of the Fund. These impacts include, among others, economic development, job creation and community capacity building.

It should also be noted that the evaluation was intended to examine the Support Fund, and was not intended to be an evaluation per se of the delegated organizations that are partners with the SOLMC under this initiative. The delegated organizations are responsible for conducting their own evaluation. The evaluation did, however, examine the implementation by the delegated organizations of the contribution agreements and the degree to which they comply with the objectives of the Support Fund.

This report includes the following:

- an introduction highlighting the purpose and context of the evaluation and the main features of the Support Fund;
- a discussion of the evaluation methodology;
- the main findings regarding relevance and design;

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[4] Some events that took place after January were examined to ensure continuity in the analysis of the data covered by the evaluation.

- the main findings regarding implementation and delivery;
- the main findings regarding the preliminary results and the enabling effects of the Support Fund; and
- a summary of the general conclusions.

A variety of appendices are attached to provide additional details and more of the context for the evaluation report. Also, to assist readers who are not already familiar with the Support Fund, Appendix K provides a summary of key concepts, designations, and expressions that cover the main elements of the Support Fund environment.

## 1.2 Profile of the Support Fund

Under section 41, Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*, which came into force on September 15, 1988, the federal government is committed to:

> *"Enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting their development as well as fostering full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society"*

In response to this commitment, HRSDC established the SOLMC and directed it to coordinate the Department's efforts in implementing section 41. One of the methods used by HRSDC to fulfil its commitments under section 41 was to launch the Support Fund on June 12, 1999.

The Support Fund is administered by the SOLMC and works through two national committees:

- the National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development (referred to in this report as the Francophone Committee); and
- the National Human Resources Development Committee for the English Linguistic Minority (referred to in this report as the Anglophone Committee).

The Support Fund is the result of consultation, analysis and strategic planning by the Comité d'adaptation des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne (CARHFC), the predecessor organization to the Francophone Committee. The Francophone Committee was established in 1996 and the Support Fund was one of the key results of the Committee's first strategic plan. The Anglophone minority community in Quebec joined the process in 1998. Appendix G provides a summary of the history and evolution of the Support Fund from 1993 to May 2002.

When the Support Fund was originally established on June 12, 1999, it was given the following objective.[5]

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[5] A complete description of the Support Fund's mandate is provided in Appendix F.

> *Through the Labour Market Partnerships (LMP), HRSDC will work closely with the Francophone Committee and the Anglophone Committee to enable them to implement their strategic plans for fostering economic development, employability and capacity building within Canada's Official Language Minority Communities. This new funding complements existing program funds at HRSDC and other federal departments.*

The federal government has signed a memorandum of understanding with each national committee. The national committees are comprised of representatives of HRSDC, the SOLMC, Official Language Minority Communities (the community side or table) and representatives of federal departments and agencies (the government side or table).

The two national committees implement their strategic plans with the help of the two sets of organizations:

- ***Regroupements de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉEs): The 12 RDÉEs*** (one for each province and territory with a Francophone minority community) are for the Francophone Committee. The RDÉEs are responsible for achieving the Support Fund's objectives through contribution agreements signed under the Support Fund. Each RDÉE is operated by a delegated organization or is constituted as a non-profit organization.[6]
- ***The Community Economic Development and Employability Committees (CEDECs):*** Eight CEDECs have been created throughout Quebec and are for the Anglophone Committee. The CEDECs work to motivate Anglophone minority communities in the areas of community capacity building and community economic development. The CEDECs are not delegated organizations under the Support Fund but are provided with resources through the Anglophone Committee.

Recently, HRSDC clarified the objectives of the Support Fund as follows:

> *"The Support Fund supports the two national committees, the RDÉEs and the CEDECs in their efforts to:*
>
> - *lever community capacity building potential and partnership resources;*
> - *strengthen local decision-making and economic priority-setting; and*
> - *create an environment that supports economic development leading eventually to job creation.*
>
> *The Support Fund complements existing program funds at HRSDC and other federal departments. It plays a facilitating role by enabling Official Language Minority Communities to access and use existing programs. The Fund also allows them to diversify their sources of funding and partnership."*

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[6] See Appendix J for the list of RDÉEs and corresponding delegated organizations.

The Support Fund provides financial assistance through contribution agreements. Funding applications for contribution agreements must meet a number of criteria, including the following:

- meet the economic needs of the Anglophone and Francophone Official Language Minority Communities in the four priority sectors identified by the Anglophone Committee or the Francophone Committee, as the case may be;
- have a visible economic impact on job creation and economic diversification in the community;
- aim to achieve quantifiable objectives and measurable results, and to ensure a transfer of knowledge and abilities in areas in which they have been successful; and
- take into account the community and government missions of the Francophone Committee and the Anglophone Committee, and make use of lasting partnerships in the public or private sector.

# 2. Evaluation Methodology

This section highlights the performance indicators and the main data collection methods developed and used to evaluate the Support Fund. The strengths and limitations of the evaluation approach are discussed at the end of the section.

## 2.1 Support Fund Performance Indicators

Based on the evaluation issues and questions, thirteen performance indicators were defined and used to evaluate the Support Fund. These indicators were based on the Support Fund's mandate and objectives, departmental policies and the *Official Languages Act*, and on the memoranda of understanding between the community and government sides.

Four performance indicators were defined to examine the relevance and design of the Support Fund:

- Indicator #1: Consistency of the Support Fund with section 41 of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*.
- Indicator #2: Consistency of the Support Fund with the parameters of the Employment Benefits and Support Measures (EBSM).
- Indicator #3: Consistency of the strategic plan of each of the two national committees with the mandate and objectives of the Support Fund.
- Indicator #4: Involvement of the community in the design of the Support Fund, including identifying the four priorities of the strategic plan of each of the two national committees and the selection of contribution agreement activities.

Four performance indicators, some with sub-indicators, were defined to examine implementation and delivery of the Support Fund:

- Indicator #5: Quality of the management of the Support Fund.
- Indicator #6: Quality of the administration and management of the contribution agreements.
- Indicator #7: Quality and adequacy of the data collection and processing systems.
- Indicator #8: Relevance of the organizational structures of the delegated and dependent organizations based on the Support Fund's objectives, including integration of the key community economic development and employability stakeholders.

Five performance indicators were defined to examine the achievement of the short and medium-term objectives and the enabling effects of the Support Fund:

- Indicator #9: Degree of achievement of the undertakings in the contribution agreements.
- Indicator #10: Influence of the Support Fund and mobilization of communities.

- Indicator #11: Level of concrete and measurable commitment by federal institutions to the strategic plans of the two national committees, the RDÉEs and the CEDECs.
- Indicator #12: Extent of the leverage effect of the contribution agreements and the resultant partnerships.
- Indicator #13: Degree of growth in the capacity of the Official Language Minority Communities to achieve the economic development and employability objectives of the Support Fund.

## 2.2 Data Collection Methods

Four main data collection methods were developed and used:

- review of documentation;
- analysis of contribution agreement files;
- interviews with key informants; and
- a written questionnaire administered to a 153 potential respondents.

The methodology was designed to ensure a high degree of consistency among the various data collection instruments. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that the data collected under the four methods were comparable and complementary. With this approach, the variety of methods added a level of rigour to the study by providing an opportunity for the cross-checking and validating of data from one source with data drawn from the other sources.

### *2.2.1 Review of Documentation*

The documentation review entailed an examination of the official documents of the Government of Canada, HRSDC, SOLMC, the two national committees and the RDÉEs. Documents were reviewed both for the information they contain on the Support Fund and for any evidence they might provide on the Support Fund's relevance to and consistency with the underlying objectives of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*. Other records were examined to answer questions relating to the Support Fund's organization and implementation. The examined documents are listed in the bibliography at the end of this report.

The documentation review provided data that was useful in determining the foundations of the Support Fund and analysing its relevance. It served as a major source of data on the funds allocated and the flow of funds transferred to the delegated organizations. It was also used to verify data generated through the interviews and written questionnaire.

### 2.2.2 Review of Contribution Agreements

The evaluation included a thorough review of the files of 18 contribution agreements[7] completed in spring 2001. A set of nine criteria was developed to analyse the contribution agreements. These criteria included the degree of consistency with the Support Fund's objectives and the degree of definition of the expected results.[8] In addition, an initial analysis of the files was used to identify questions relating to information, verification or validation. These questions were then directed to the contribution agreement's delegated organization. The file review and verification process produced data that complemented and helped to cross-check data provided by the other sources.

### 2.2.3 Interviews

Forty-nine interviews were conducted with 46 respondents.[9] The interview respondents were selected from the key stakeholders involved with the Support Fund, which include HRSDC, the Francophone Committee, the Anglophone Committee, the RDÉEs, the CEDECs and the Regional Economic Development Officers (REDOs). These respondents were selected because the success of the Support Fund's implementation depends on them and because they are in the best position to provide first-hand information and data on the Fund. A sample of parties outside the Support Fund was also included to obtain data and opinions from third parties. The outside respondents were all involved as clients, collaborators or partners of the delegated organizations and were sources of more detailed information on the Fund's implementation, the special challenges facing the officers and the extent to which the desired outcomes were achieved.

Seven interview protocols were developed and tested using a sub-sample of the respondents. Each of the seven protocols relates to a specific category of interview respondents, as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Protocol 1: | SOLMC employees and managers | 3 respondents |
| Protocol 2: | Members of the Francophone or Anglophone Committees | 6 respondents |
| Protocol 3: | RDÉE manager | 12 respondents |
| Protocol 4: | REDOs, CEDEC members and Anglophone community organizations | 10 respondents |
| Protocol 5: | Members of Francophone communities who are RDÉE partners | 8 respondents |
| Protocol 6: | Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages | 1 respondent |
| Protocol 7: | Members of funding application review committees | 6 respondents |

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[7] In total, 49 contribution agreements were signed during the first three years of the program but the majority of these agreements expire in 2001-2002. The decision was made to limit the review to the first 18 contribution agreements, which were all completed toward the end of the 2000-2001 fiscal year. It was considered premature to review the files of the other agreements because the other agreements had not been completed by the start of the evaluation period.

[8] See Exhibit 2 under the discussion of indicator #7 for the full list of factors and a summary of the findings.

[9] Further interviews were conducted with the three main officials of the Support Fund to verify data and gather more detailed information on certain aspects of its implementation.

Each of the seven protocols included questions common to all respondents plus questions targeted to the specific experience and expertise of the protocol's category of respondent regarding the Fund's implementation and management. The questions were designed to obtain reliable information and to ensure the comparability of the participants' responses. As an example, the interview protocol developed for RDÉE managers is provided in Appendix H.

The interviews were semi-directed to allow for the collection of specific information while making it easier for respondents to provide opinions and analyses to be used in developing the evaluation findings and conclusions. In some cases, questions relating to information on specific contribution agreements were added to the interviews with the applicable respondents. Respondents were encouraged to corroborate their knowledge and opinions with facts, which were then compared with the data from other sources. Each interview was conducted in the respondent's language of choice and the majority took place by telephone.

### 2.2.4 Written Questionnaire

The written questionnaire made it possible to collect information from more people and to corroborate or enhance the data from the other sources. The questionnaire also provided an opportunity to approach certain questions from different angles and to collect complementary information from respondents who provided different types or more detailed information in writing than they could or would have been prepared to share in an interview. The questionnaire was also able to add a quantitative dimension to an essentially qualitative exercise.

The questionnaire was pre-tested in both official languages with a sample of respondents from the Anglophone and Francophone communities. Care was taken to ensure the consistency of the questions asked in the written questionnaires and those in the interview protocols. The questionnaire was distributed and administered by electronic mail. The initial mailing was followed by a second, and telephone reminders were made.

The written questionnaire was sent to 153 potential respondents,[10] as indicated in Exhibit 1. "RDÉE community members" refers to members of the boards of directors of the RDÉEs and, in a very few cases, RDÉE employees. "RDÉE partners" refers to a sample of people who interacted with the RDÉE, including partners, clients, members of the Francophone communities and government employees. "Anglophone minority community" refers to members or employees of the Anglophone Committee, the REDOs, volunteer members of the CEDECs and one external partner.[11] Further details are provided in Appendix I.

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[10] The initial number of targeted respondents was 158, but five of them had left this field of activity.

[11] It was considered preferable to limit the number of external respondents in the Anglophone community because CEDECs are not currently delegated organizations, thereby reducing the probability that the people with whom they are working are informed about the Support Fund.

A rigorous exercise was conducted to prepare a list of RDÉE partners and community groups active in the economic development and employability field, including associations with an economic mission, amalgamations of municipalities, entrepreneurs working in the fields prioritized by the two national committees, and a host of other stakeholders who acted in one capacity or another as partners of the delegated organizations. This list was developed using the following process:

- A list of relevant community organizations that are not members of the RDÉEs was prepared in consultation with the RDÉEs, from official documents of the national committees and from the Internet sites of the national Francophone committee and provincial departments.
- A pool of potential respondents was prepared and a sample was selected taking into consideration a series of factors such as geographic distribution, member/non-member distribution, and community/government distribution.

**Exhibit 1**
**Respondents to the Written Questionnaire**

| | RDÉE Community Members | RDÉE Partners | Anglophone Minority Community | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Potential Respondents Contacted | 73 | 65 | 15 | 153 |
| 2. Respondents who Completed the Questionnaire | 46 | 36 | 12 | 94 |
| 3. Respondents Unable to Complete the Questionnaire | 11 | 8 | 2 | 21 |
| 4. Potential Respondents Who Did Not Respond | 16 | 21 | 1 | 38 |

The overall response rate for the written questionnaire was 75 percent, including respondents who completed the questionnaire and respondents who stated that they were unable to complete the questionnaire. The active participation rate was 61 percent, and refers to the respondents who completed the questionnaire. Exhibit I-1 of Appendix I also shows the response rate for each of the three categories of respondents.

The level of agreement with the statements/questions of the written questionnaire was calculated for all respondents and for each category of respondent using a response rating approach. Under this approach, the maximum rating for each question is 4. A question with a response rating of less than 2.5 is considered to be negative, a rating above 2.5 is considered to be positive, and a rating above 3.25 is considered to be very high.

Appendix A shows the cumulative results of the written questionnaire. Appendices B, C and D show the detailed results for each of the three categories of respondents. Appendix E contains the results of the responses from all respondents to each question on the written questionnaire.

## 2.3 Strengths and Limitations of the Evaluation Approach

The approach used for this evaluation was designed to emphasize the use of multiple lines of evidence.

- Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that the data collected under the four data collection methods were comparable and complementary so that the findings from one source could be informed, corroborated or further explored by the other sources.
- The combined use of the four data collection methods enabled the evaluation to take advantage of the strengths and minimize/offset the limitations of each method.
- The response rating approach used to examine the level of agreement with the statements/questions of the written questionnaire for all respondents and for each category of respondent provided a way to systematically analyze and synthesize information/feedback from stakeholders on a range of issues.

At the same time, however, the following limitations should be noted:

- The evaluation is formative in nature and it was able to consider whether there is evidence of the achievement of short and medium-term objectives and results. However, it was too soon to undertake an analysis of the longer-term impacts of the Support Fund.
- The research design relied heavily on qualitative methodologies. While qualitative methods generate in-depth and rich anecdotal evidence, they are often criticized for being too subjective. To help address concerns in this area, the evaluation emphasized the systematic analysis of these data and used qualitative findings in concert with quantitative and concrete evidence where possible.

# *3. Relevance and Design of the Support Fund*

This section of the report highlights the main findings for the four performance indicators used to examine the relevance and design of the Support Fund.

## *Indicator #1: Consistency of the Support Fund with section 41 of Part VII of the* Official Languages Act

**The Support Fund is consistent with section 41 of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act***

There was almost unanimous agreement among the interview respondents regarding the consistency of the Support Fund with the objectives of section 41 of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*.

The analysis of documentation also indicated that the Support Fund represents a direct response by HRSDC to the objectives of Part VII.

The review of the documentation and events leading up to the creation of the Support Fund and interviews with community representatives indicated that the Fund was the culmination[12] of a long process of consultations and reflection within the Francophone and Acadian communities and in federal bodies (first at HRSDC and gradually at eight other federal institutions) on the need to design a comprehensive and innovative strategy to support economic development and employment for these communities. The Anglophone community of Quebec has also become a participant in the Support Fund initiative.

More than two-thirds of the interview respondents from delegated organizations, the two national committees and federal departments cited the enabling effect of the Support Fund. According to these respondents, the Support Fund helps to strengthen the foundations of economic development in Official Language Minority Communities by supporting collaboration among the dynamic forces available within the communities. Similarly, respondents to the written questionnaire assigned a rating of 3.19 out of 4 to the question relating to whether the Support Fund has made it possible to complete[13] and/or strengthen the economic development organizations and institutions of Official Language Minority Communities. (See Question 12 of the questionnaire in Appendix A).

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[12] The Support Fund's history is summarized in Appendix G.

[13] The expression "complete and/or strengthen the economic development organizations and institutions of Official Language Minority Communities" means that the vitality of a community is intimately linked to its access to a full range of institutions essential to its growth; the Support Fund helps to complete that network of institutions.

The interview respondents in Quebec as well as among Francophone and Acadian communities stated that, by creating the Support Fund, HRSDC placed itself among the top federal institutions for its active contribution to the development of Official Language Minority Communities.[14] They expressed disappointment that more federal institutions with an economic mandate have not followed HRSDC's example. Interview respondents from 11 of the 15 organizations directly involved (12 RDÉEs, two national committees and HRSDC) would like the federal institutions that signed the memoranda of understanding[15] to invest more, especially in the area of economic development. This issue is examined in more detail under indicators #8 and #11.

**Concepts, approaches and mechanisms related to the functioning of the Support Fund and national committees have been used as models by some other departments**

An examination of the documentation on Part VII and the interviews with managers of the Francophone Committee and at HRSDC showed that concepts, approaches and mechanisms related to the functioning of the national committees and the Support Fund have been used as models by Health Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

**Some respondents expressed concern that the lack of longer-term funding for the Support Fund and the SOLMC places both the delegated organizations and the main departmental stakeholder in a situation of uncertainty**

The eight respondents from the RDÉEs, the national committees and HRSDC who addressed this topic indicated that the lack of longer-term funding[16] for the Support Fund places the operations of the delegated organizations[17] at risk because some of the current or potential employees of the RDÉEs, perceiving the temporary nature of the Support Fund and its funding, are easily drawn away by offers of more stable employment elsewhere.[18] The interviews with HRSDC officials indicated that the lack of a permanent operating budget for the SOLMC and the need for the SOLMC to resubmit annually to Treasury Board are creating insecurity and contributing to the turnover rate among employees. The general view is that the viability of the delegated organizations and the scope of their actions are closely tied to the stability of the Support Fund initiative, particularly to the degree of security and permanency of the Fund's operational and financial foundations.

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[14] A number of respondents from delegated organizations and from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages mentioned however, that in their view, some branches of the Department are not adequately fulfilling their responsibilities under section 41.

[15] On March 20, 1998, the Francophone Committee signed its second memorandum of understanding. Nine federal institutions also signed this document: HRSDC, Industry Canada, Canadian Heritage, Western Economic Diversification Canada (WED), Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), Business Development Bank of Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Treasury Board, and Public Works and Government Services Canada. On May 29, 1998, the Anglophone Committee was created and signed its first memorandum of understanding with HRSDC.

[16] The issue of permanent funding is also discussed under indicator #2.

[17] In Support Fund documents, the SOLMC uses the expressions "delegated", "sponsor", "coordinating" and "beneficiary" organization interchangeably. The technical term "delegated organization" has been used for the purposes of this evaluation.

[18] Some RDÉEs in regions with very small minority communities where the French-speaking professional workforce is also small, train and develop new employees only to have them "raided" by the regional offices of federal departments, forcing them to start all over again.

## *Indicator #2: Consistency of the Support Fund with the parameters of the Employment Benefits and Support Measures (EBSM)*

As noted in Section 1 of this report, the Support Fund is an LMP initiative[19] under the EBSM. Therefore the contribution agreements signed under the Support Fund must comply with the terms and conditions of the EBSM.

**There is a dichotomy between the mandate/objectives of the Support Fund and those of the EBSM**

The objective of the EBSM is to assist individuals to prepare for, obtain and maintain employment, resulting in savings to the EI Account. As part of this overall objective, LMP initiatives enable organizations to identify their human resource needs and develop plans to address these needs. These partnerships can also be used to implement workforce adjustment measures.

The objectives of the Support Fund are economic development, employability and community capacity building. When the Support Fund was launched in 1999, the stakeholders at the time did not see any discrepancy between HRSDC's objectives for the Support Fund and those of the EBSM. However, in June 2000, senior HRSDC officials issued a directive to the Department's senior regional managers specifying the appropriate uses of the EBSM.[20]

The possibility that the Support Fund does not fully comply with the parameters of the EBSM is of concern to the majority of the interview respondents from the national committees, the delegated organizations and HRSDC. These interview respondents see a dichotomy between HRSDC's commitments when the Support Fund was announced on June 12, 1999 and HRSDC's interpretation of the EBSM's terms and conditions, especially with respect to economic development. They consider the dichotomy to be forcing the delegated organizations to restrict and even alter the direction of their activities.

When questioned on this matter, HRSDC representatives indicated that managers are regularly required, in their role as public administrators, to interpret program criteria to ensure that the programs serve the public interest. In their view, the interpretation of the EBSM made it possible to effectively implement the Support Fund over three years in accordance with the existing terms and conditions. They commented on the importance of beginning discussions about a permanent fund that would not be the sole responsibility of HRSDC but rather of all of the institutions with an economic and human resources development mandate.

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[19] As an LMP initiative, the Support Fund is not a program, *per se*. The majority of respondents from the RDEEs, the national committees and the SOLMC who addressed this topic perceived the Support Fund to be a new program with its own terms and conditions, which is not the case.

[20] The end result of this directive was a questioning of the appropriateness of several LMP. Among other areas, the Support Fund focuses on economic development, which is not a component targeted by the EBSM.

## *Indicator #3: Consistency of the strategic plan of each of the two national committees with the mandate and objectives of the Support Fund*

The analysis conducted for indicator #3 involved comparing the directions of the strategic plan of each of the two national committees with the objectives of the Support Fund.

As noted in Section 1 of this report, HRSDC has described the Support Fund's mandate as follows:

> *"The Support Fund supports the two national committees, the RDÉEs and the CEDECs in their efforts to:*
>
> - *lever community capacity building potential and partnership resources;*
> - *strengthen local decision-making and economic priority-setting; and*
> - *create an environment that supports economic development leading eventually to job creation.*
>
> *The Support Fund complements existing program funds at HRSDC and other federal departments. It plays a facilitating role by enabling Official Language Minority Communities to access and use existing programs. The Fund also allows them to diversify their sources of funding and partnership."*

Similarly, the Support Fund's submission documents state that it will assist the Anglophone Committee and the Francophone Committee in implementing their action plans to foster the economic development and employability and building the capacity of the Official Language Minority Communities.

**The strategic plan and directions of the Francophone Committee are consistent with the mandate and objectives of the Support Fund**[21]

The mission of the community side of the Francophone Committee commits it to:

> *"Promote economic and human resources development in Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities."*

The Francophone Committee has four strategic sectors[22] that provide the framework for this mission.

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[21] The Support Fund is the product of the efforts of the Francophone Committee, with the assistance of HRSDC, of its assessment of the problem of economic development and employability and of the related potential for community vitality that economic growth brings. This explains the high degree of consistency between the Support Fund's mandate and the Francophone Committee's strategic vision.

[22] The Francophone Committee's four strategic sectors are the knowledge-based economy, rural development, tourism and integration of youth in economic development.

The review of documentation and the contribution agreement files, along with the interviews conducted with stakeholders both within and outside the delegated organizations, confirmed that the Francophone Committee's strategic plan is being implemented in the regions through both enabling initiatives and activities aimed at economic development and employability. At the same time, however, these sources of information indicated that the impact on economic development is not occurring uniformly and is not necessarily taking shape in the same way in all regions.

The evaluation found very strong support for and appreciation of the Francophone Committee's direction throughout the country, with the exception of some respondents in Ontario who question the strategic direction of the Francophone Committee but not the idea behind the Support Fund.[23] Several respondents from the RDÉEs emphasized that the Francophone Committee's four strategic sectors are very useful in targeting action and channelling energies but also broad enough to allow the necessary flexibility. Without such priorities, these respondents believe that the collective action of the delegated organizations might have been too piecemeal, which would have undermined the Support Fund's effectiveness. Some respondents from the RDÉEs, the Francophone Committee and a signatory department to the memorandum of understanding felt that the cultural economy (i.e. the marketing of cultural products and businesses) should be added to the Committee's list of strategic sectors as a fifth priority.[24]

**It is less evident that the Anglophone Committee's strategic plan is consistent with the mandate and objectives of the Support Fund**

A review of documentation and the activities of the CEDECs, which operate with the support of REDOs, shows that the Anglophone community chose to focus on community capacity building. The interview respondents also indicated that the Anglophone Committee and the CEDECs are focused on building the capacities of the Anglophone minority communities and community economic development, but not economic development. The stated mission of the Anglophone Committee[25] confirms this emphasis.

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[23] For Ontario respondents in general, whether they were interviewed or appended comments to the written questionnaire, there are two conflicting currents of thought. Fifty-five percent of respondents who commented on the matter, whether they were members of the board of directors of the Ontario RDÉE, community partners or employees, indicated their support for the Francophone Committee's strategic direction, while forty-five per cent rejected it.

[24] As part of its strategic planning exercise, the Francophone Committee is reviewing the relevance of this fifth component.

[25] The Anglophone Committee's four strategic priorities are communications, community capacity building, youth and job creation, and economic diversification.

> *"The mission of the National Committee is to create an enabling environment to enhance the vitality and the development of the English linguistic minority to achieve its vision by: implementing, managing and monitoring the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 1998 between the Government of Canada, represented by the Minister of Human Resources Development, and the English linguistic minority community, located in Quebec; providing a forum for exchange, strategic decision making and joint planning; fostering discussion, dialogue and mutual understanding; integrating partners; creating an environment to encourage, support and guide community economic development; communicating the mission of the National Committee; influencing policies, programs and services of HRSDC and any other federal organization who participate in this initiative."*

A review of the activities undertaken or completed under the Anglophone Committee's strategic direction found there to be a very diverse range of activities that were poorly targeted and difficult to reconcile[26] with the concept of community economic development. A very broad interpretation was given to the concept of "community capacity building", including that of creating and eventually establishing the conditions essential to community economic development. It should be noted, however, that a few of the current activities do more clearly fall into the category of community economic development.

**Part of the reason for the observed difference between the Anglophone Committee's strategic plan and the mandate and objectives of the Support Fund may be that the Support Fund was initially developed around the needs of Francophone Official Language Minority Communities**

An examination of the Anglophone Committee memorandum of understanding signed on May 28, 1998 found no mention of "economic development" or "community economic development". By way of explanation, SOLMC respondents stated that the Support Fund must meet the specific needs of the Anglophone minority community and that this difference is warranted by the fact that the progress of the Anglophone Committee and the CEDECs in the area of economic development is behind that of the Francophone Committee and the RDÉEs.

The view that the Anglophone Committee and the CEDECs are behind the Francophone Committee and the RDÉEs in their evolution is only partially supported, however. Other sources indicate that the emphasis on community capacity building is less a matter of being behind the Francophone Committee and more a matter of recognizing a different situation. For the majority of respondents from the community table and the REDOs, the present orientation of the Anglophone Committee reflects the needs assessment conducted among the Anglophone communities of Quebec and the conviction that their first step must be the creation of conditions favourable to community economic development before launching concrete projects. In their view, piecemeal economic development is discouraging to communities and tends to disappear when contributions and grants dry up. These respondents from the community table and the REDOs feel that it is essential to provide communities with the opportunity to develop.[27]

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[26] The initiatives arising from this strategic direction include such varied activities as meetings with various individuals and community organizations to raise awareness and visibility, sponsorship of various school competitions, participation in the development of social action plans, and involvement in the creation of a call centre.

It should be noted, however, that three of the five interview respondents from the CEDECs and community side did not fully agree with the current approach of the Anglophone Committee. They felt it was too far removed from economic development and they would like to see a reorientation of the direction of the Committee towards economic development.

Although the memorandum of understanding of the Francophone Committee covers nine departments, the first memorandum of understanding for the Anglophone Committee involves only HRSDC. According to HRSDC officials, this explains in part the Anglophone Committee's lack of emphasis on economic development. With the imminent signing of a new memorandum of understanding that will have six federal institutions (several with an economic mandate) become involved in the Anglophone Committee's program, HRSDC officials believe that there will be an increased emphasis on economic development. This expectation should be tempered, however, by the fact that the majority of the Anglophone Committee's employees have stated that they do not intend to give priority to economic development initiatives and that they prefer to focus initially on creating the social conditions necessary for economic development.

As noted in Section 1 of this report and detailed in Appendix G, the Support Fund was initially developed around the needs of the Francophone Official Language Minority Communities. The documented differences and the reaction of several members of the community table illustrates some of the practical issues that can arise in attempting to transpose a program designed for the specific needs of one official language minority to the other.

## *Indicator #4: Involvement of the community in the design of the Support Fund, including identifying the four priorities of the strategic plan of each of the two national committees and the selection of contribution agreement activities*

Subsection 43(2)[28] of the *Official Languages Act* enshrines the principle of the consultation of communities in developing policies and programs to implement the two objectives of section 41. Therefore consultation under the Support Fund is essential.

### The Support Fund is the product of consultation

The documentation review indicated that the Support Fund was initially the result of consultation, analysis and strategic planning within the Francophone and Acadian communities and federal institutions. The history of the Support Fund (see Appendix G) indicates that the process of consultation and collaboration between the Francophone and Acadian communities and HRSDC began in the mid-nineties with a national consultation[29] on occupational training, and that there were strong regional components. The discussions that occurred between 1993 and 1995 were coordinated by the CARHFC, the predecessor to the Francophone Committee, and reached a consensus that training and adjustment of human resources must be considered in the context of regional or even local economic development. The transfer of responsibility for occupational training to the provinces in 1996 helped to reinforce the commitment to economic development and employability as the essential driving force behind the vitality of Official Language Minority Communities. Three national forums and many discussions under the auspices of the Francophone Committee resulted in the announcement of the creation of the Support Fund in June 1999.

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[27] By using this description of the current problem, respondents are referring to the English-speaking communities in various rural and urban areas of the province where socio-economic vitality is weak.

[28] "[The Minister of Canadian Heritage] shall take such measures as he considers appropriate to ensure public consultation in the development of policies and review of programs relating to the advancement of the equality of status and use of English and French in Canadian society."

More recently, the Anglophone community in Quebec and other federal institutions have joined the consultations (as indicated in Appendix G).

### Stakeholders are generally satisfied with the Support Fund consultations, although some areas of disagreement were noted

Interview respondents reported that, for the Francophone and Acadian communities, the identification of the four strategic sectors was the culmination of this multi-faceted process. In general, community stakeholders are very satisfied with the four priority sectors selected by the Francophone Committee. As noted in the discussion of indicator # 3, however, some respondents favour adding the cultural economy to the current list of priority sectors. This view is currently being considered under the Francophone Committee's strategic review.

Respondents to the written questionnaire gave a very high positive rating of 3.49 out of 4 to the question regarding the relevance of the priority sectors selected by each of the national committees. (See Question 3 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). The RDÉE partners gave the question the highest rating (3.55), with the RDÉE members and the Anglophone community giving it a rating of 3.45.

Respondents to the written questionnaire also assigned a positive rating of 3.21 to the question regarding the degree to which the RDÉE or CEDEC has a good understanding of the economic development and employability needs of the respondent's region. (See Question 8 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). The RDÉE partners responded most positively to this question (with a very high positive rating of 3.36), followed by RDÉE members (with a rating of 3.16) and the Anglophone community (with a rating of 3.00).

At the same time, however, certain areas of disagreement were noted, as discussed below.

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[29] "National" in this case refers to the Francophone and Acadian communities.

In the case of the Francophone Committee, for example, forty-five per cent of Ontario respondents criticized the "top down" approach adopted when the Support Fund was introduced into the province, although they agree with the idea behind the Support Fund. Some of these respondents felt that, given the existing organizations with an economic mandate, Ontario needed a fund that provides some flexibility in the realization of projects of an economic nature rather than an enabling fund. According to these Ontario respondents, a "one size fits all" model cannot be used throughout the country and consideration should have been given to the organizational structures that were in place prior to the arrival of the Support Fund. These respondents believe that the approach was imposed on Ontario by the Francophone Committee, without appropriate representativeness or transparency.

Not everyone in Ontario agrees with these criticisms, however. Some Ontario respondents pointed out that the existing organizations are not the only response to economic development in the province and are reassured by the arrival of the Ontario RDÉE. They consider the enabling nature of the Support Fund to be important for their collective economic future. They also expressed their concern about the demobilizing effect of the divided views in Ontario.

For their part, respondents from the Francophone Committee have a different reading of the situation and the elements underlying the opinions of the various stakeholders in Ontario. That having been said, an agreement was reached in spring 2001 that resulted in the creation of the RDÉE. The interviews and responses to the questionnaire indicate, however, that disputes continue to occupy stakeholders in Ontario and to limit the scope of the Support Fund in the province.

In a few regions, some of the interviewed RDÉE partners questioned the consistency of the activities selected by certain RDÉEs with the strategic direction of the Francophone Committee, as well as the quality of the communication of these choices to the communities.

In the case of the Anglophone Committee, sixty percent of the community respondents who replied to the interview question concerning the relevance of the strategic orientation of the Anglophone Committee indicated their disappointment with the strategic orientation chosen by the Committee. The selection of the committee's four strategic directions, especially the choice of community capacity building as the essential starting point of any community economic development strategy in the regions, was based on consultations conducted by the community table on the needs of each of the English language minority communities in Quebec.[30]

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[30] The focus of the consultations was not limited to economic development but covered all aspects of community development. It examined "each region's strengths, weaknesses and ongoing requirements within the context of sustainable community economic development". Source: *A Community Capacity-Building Toolkit for Quebec's English-speaking Communities*, May 2002, National Human Resources Development Committee for the English Linguistic Minority.

The community respondents who were disappointed with the chosen strategic orientation felt that the process used following the needs assessment was too nebulous, did not incorporate the essential human and entrepreneurial components of economic development, and represented a questionable promise for the economic growth of Anglophone minority communities.

It should be noted that a minority of partners with the delegated organizations in both the Anglophone and Francophone communities would have preferred the Support Fund to be involved in the direct delivery of service to business, the provision of direct funding to business,[31] or the funding of social development projects. These views suggest that the goals and objectives of the Support Fund are still not fully understood or supported by the communities.

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[31] For example, investment funds.

# *4. Implementation and Delivery*

This section of the report highlights the main findings for the four performance indicators and sub-indicators that were used to examine implementation and delivery of the Support Fund.

## *Indicator #5: Quality of the management of the Support Fund*

This indicator was reviewed on the basis of five sub-indicators.

### *#5a. The eligibility criteria and the operation of the funding application approval process*

**The eligibility criteria and approval process for contribution agreements are considered by most to be generally working well, despite the lack of alignment between the objectives of the Support Fund and the EBSM (as noted under indicator #2)**

The funding application approval process includes several steps. The community side makes an initial verification of the consistency of the funding application with the Francophone Committee's strategic priorities.[32] The SOLMC then conducts a detailed analysis of the applications relying on its knowledge of the operation, effectiveness and stage of development of the applicant. In principle, the application is then sent to the review committee (note that the review committee is examined under indicator #5b). The application is then approved, sometimes after a final consultation with the applicant.

The number of applications rejected is small because initial project concepts that do not fall within the Support Fund's eligibility criteria (presented in Appendix F) are re-oriented, or redirected to other more appropriate sources of funding, before they reach the formal application stage for the Support Fund.

Despite the lack of alignment between the objectives of the Support Fund and the EBSM (as noted in the discussion of indicator #2), respondents to the written questionnaire gave a high positive rating of 3.4 out of 4 to the question of whether the Support Fund's funding application eligibility criteria are appropriate and will contribute to economic development leading eventually to job creation (See Question 5 of the questionnaire in Appendix A).

In most instances, the interview respondents also indicated that the approval process is generally working well, although several areas of concern were noted and are discussed below.

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[32] The Anglophone Committee is not involved in the approval process because it is the only organization of the Anglophone community to sign a contribution agreement to date.

**There is concern that the administrative process is becoming burdensome**

Close to half of the 14 leaders of delegated organizations mentioned how burdensome the process and the requirements for the preparation and submission of funding applications are.

The SOLMC stressed that from the start the government and community sides wanted the Support Fund to have as light an administrative process as possible, while adhering to the requirements for sound management of public funds, in order to ensure optimum operation of the Support Fund and its maximum effectiveness in the field. Both the SOLMC and the community side are beginning to be concerned about the burden gradually developing around this administrative process.

**There is evidence of a lack of clarity and a lack of a common understanding regarding the criteria and process for determining amounts for regular and "major project" contribution agreements**

Close to half of the 14 leaders of delegated organizations mentioned the lack of specific information on the criteria used to determine the size of the budget allocated to a given RDÉE. According to the SOLMC, the confusion comes in part from the fact that the community side's appreciation of the factors determining the amounts allocated under each contribution agreement differs from its own. For its part, the community side claims that there is an annual allocation of $100,000 for each delegated organization for the realization of each priority sector duly planned and ready for implementation and $100,000 for the coordination of these four sectors. This formula has given rise to specific expectations in the communities.

The SOLMC states that it never issued such a precise formula. It also stated that the amount allocated depends on the organizational and administrative capacity of the delegated organization, its ability to carry out each of the priorities, and the degree and quality of the use and management of the funds during the previous year. The amount allocated also depends on the innovative and motivating nature of the application and the existence of a proper strategy that will allow the contribution agreement to be used as a lever for investment by other public or private sources. Depending on the circumstances, the amount allocated could be higher or lower than the formula communicated by the community side. Since the total of the funding applications exceeded the funds available for 2002-2003, it was necessary to limit the allocations. This approach has not been necessary in previous years since the amounts allocated were generally less because a number of delegated organizations were still in the start-up phase.

Some of the delegated organizations in the North and in Western Canada expressed concern because they had invested a great deal of energy and mobilized segments of their communities to prepare applications in anticipation of the maximum funding only to learn later that the maximum limit was much lower. This was the case with three organizations in the northern territories. The organizations believe that their credibility was damaged and that some community members were discouraged following the announcement of the amount of the contribution agreement.

There is provision in the Support Fund for the approval of a contribution for a major project once per delegated organization in the Support Fund's current cycle. The eligibility criteria for these "major" projects are somewhat vague. According to the SOLMC, the project must apply to the whole province and potentially be applicable to other regions or nationally. It must involve a significant number of partners at both the organizational and financial levels. The SOLMC indicated that the Support Fund's overall budget does not allow for the approval of several major projects each year. However, respondents in one community in particular reported that the credibility of the RDÉE and its ability to continue to be an effective agent of economic development depends on the anticipated approval of the major project.

**The Support Fund has, to some extent, mechanisms in place to minimize duplication with other federal initiatives and to complement other sources of funds**

The interviews and documentation review indicated that the Support Fund has mechanisms in place to minimise duplication with other federal initiatives and to complement other sources of funds. The Fund was designed to complement existing programs, to encourage partnerships and to minimize the possibility of duplication of funds. For example, as noted under indicator #5b, one of the roles of the members of the review committee is to ensure that planned contributions would not duplicate or replace existing programs. In addition, the approval of contribution agreements requires the identification of all funding sources. Several contribution agreements mention the kind of contributions expected from partners other than HRSDC, although very few of them specify the exact amounts.

### *#5b. Operation of the review committees*

**The evidence indicates that some regional coordinators and other members of the review committees do not adequately understand the Support Fund or their role in the process of reviewing contribution applications. This could limit the reliability of their recommendations and their contribution to the decision making process of the review committees.**

The documentation related to the Support Fund indicates that HRSDC's regional coordinators are required to sit on the funding application review committees along with representatives from other departments and representatives from the community side. Review committee members must fill out a control sheet and ensure that the planned contribution would not duplicate or replace existing programs. In principle, as they do for other programs, the coordinators and other members of the review committees must keep abreast of the progress of contribution agreements in their region and, if necessary, provide support to the delegated organizations. The SOLMC's operating budget includes a substantial allocation to HRSDC regional offices to carry out various activities under Part VII, including a number of functions related to the Support Fund.

The interviews with members of the review committees and their responses to the written questionnaire indicated that their knowledge and their involvement in the review of funding applications vary widely. Members from the community side who sit on the review committees are very well informed about the eligibility criteria. The coordinators from other departments, however, reported that they were not given clear enough information on the eligibility criteria and the level of funding awarded. Of the ten HRSDC regional coordinators who should have completed the written questionnaire, seven responded and two did not, while a third indicated that he had not been at the job long enough to feel comfortable answering the questionnaire. Even among those who did respond, a few commented that they were reluctant to respond to the questionnaire because of their limited knowledge of the Support Fund.

A majority of the regional coordinators indicated that their own role with respect to the Support Fund is not clearly defined. For their part, the SOLMC managers reported that they make annual presentations to the coordinators on the Support Fund.

### *#5c. Level of investment and distribution of the budget envelope*

Forty-nine contribution agreements were signed between the introduction of the Support Fund and March 31, 2002.

**Although the budget for the Support Fund was $21 million for the first three years, only about $15 million was invested during that time**

As indicated in Section 1 of this report, the Support Fund's budget for the first three years was $21 million. This budget was allocated to the Fund on the basis of $5 million in 1999-2000, $7 million in 2000-2001, and $9 million in 2001-2002. Ultimately, $1,434,484 was invested in the first year, $5,396,693 in the second year, and $8,219,115 in the final year, for a total investment of $15,047,292.[33] These total expenditures represent about 72 percent of the Fund's available budget.

The SOLMC managers explained that the differences in the first two years reflected the fact that some RDÉEs were in the process of being set up and, therefore, were unable to carry out any more programming at that time.

**There is also a gap between the total amounts approved under some contribution agreements and the amounts transferred, with the evidence suggesting that the amounts transferred were tied to implementation of the agreements**

In some cases, the amounts transferred were less than the amounts approved under the contribution agreements. For 2002-2003, the SOLMC received a budget increase of $1.5M and approved a total of $10,141,665 in contribution agreements. The final investment was $8,219,115, however, which represents a difference of 19 percent.

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[33] Source: Tables provided by the SOLMC.

The evidence suggests that the amounts transferred were tied to implementation of the contribution agreements. For example, there were delays in the start-up of some contribution agreement initiatives due to the time taken to hire staff and, as a result, there was a corresponding reduction in the amounts transferred. The difference between the amounts approved under certain contribution agreements and the amounts transferred also reflected, depending on the case, the delegated organization's inability to act, the complexity or level of difficulty inherent in community economic development faced by the delegated organization, or delays in the approval cycle and implementation of the contribution agreements.

The delegated organizations reported being very satisfied with the quickness with which SOLMC paid the amounts approved. The transfers were made regularly throughout the year and were conditional on the submission of satisfactory financial and activity reports.

**The Support Fund is reaching Official Language Minority Communities in different provinces**

The distribution of the Support Fund's budget across Canada indicates that there was a level of equity among the minority communities in different provinces. The amounts allocated to the Northern territories were less because of their later start-up and their small population. Ontario received less than had been anticipated because of the disagreements that existed (as discussed under indicator #4), although it appears that the allocation for 2002-2003 is within the norm. To date, three major projects have been allocated, including a major project to the Francophone Committee for the launch and operation of the Gazel.ca portal, a medium-size project in Manitoba and a smaller project in Nova Scotia.

### *#5d. Monitoring the realization of the undertakings of the contribution agreements and their administration and financial management*

**The evidence suggests that it may be useful to consider ways to improve the monitoring of deliverables and the results of the contribution agreements**

The SOLMC gradually put in place oversight procedures relating to implementation of the contribution agreements and compliance of expenditures by the delegated organizations with the administrative policy governing those agreements. Each delegated organization is required to submit two monthly reports: a financial report and an activity report. The SOLMC regularly visits each of the contribution agreement signatories to verify on-site progress toward implementation and the quality of financial management and operations. This work includes verifying vouchers for expenses claimed.

There are two currents of thought among the delegated organizations concerning the level of oversight exercised by the SOLMC. More than half of the interview respondents from delegated organizations, especially those from organizations that have demonstrated their competency and put in place management measures in compliance with accepted practices, find the monthly reports to be too onerous and of little value. Those respondents believe that the administrative burden associated with the Support Fund delays achievement of other important initiatives and consequently limits the Support Fund's effectiveness. Other respondents from delegated organizations find monthly reporting quite normal, and a small minority of them find the reports to be useful since they use the processes as mechanisms for managing and controlling their operations.

To the extent that one of the desired outcomes of the Support Fund is to generate major investments from other public and private sources, organizations that are successful in this area report that they feel constrained by the need to complete the required monthly, quarterly and annual reports,[34] a requirement that they feel consumes their available energies to no purpose.

The SOLMC views its reporting requirements around the Support Fund as necessary for the diligent management of public funds and reflective of the fact that certain delegated organizations are in the start-up phase and/or are consolidating their resources. Managers of the delegated organizations and HRSDC would be in favour of quarterly reports, which is the minimum requirement for the EBSM, for organizations with a proven administrative capacity. However, departmental respondents do not believe that it would be appropriate to have two different reporting regimes.

The analysis of contribution agreement files conducted for this evaluation included a review of activity reports produced by the delegated organizations. The review identified a number of shortcomings with the current reporting system, such as a lack of clarity regarding the intended purpose, uses and content. Further details are provided in the discussion of indicator # 7.

#### The current reporting structure may be limiting the SOLMC's ability to collect data

When asked about the implementation plans for the four strategic priorities of the Anglophone Committee, the SOLMC was not able to confirm the existence of such plans. After further investigation, the SOLMC did confirm the development of an implementation plan for only one sector, namely, communication. The quality and adequacy of data collection and processing systems are also examined in more detail under indicator #7.

### *#5e. Training and support provided to delegated and dependent organizations,[35] including by the SOLMC and the two community tables*

#### Support from the SOLMC to the delegated organizations has improved and is considered to be excellent by a small majority of the interviewed managers of delegated organizations

According to the interviewed managers and officials of the SOLMC, there was a large learning curve when the Support Fund was launched and virtually everything had to be created on both sides.

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[34] A series of reports must be completed for each partnership or investment realized by the organization.

[35] By dependent organizations, we mean organizations that are not signatories to the contribution agreements but that receive direct services from a delegated organization. The CEDECs are the main example of this type of organization in that the Community Table covers the salary of the REDO assigned to them and assumes the operating costs.

The delegated organizations[36] reported a generally positive evolution in the training and support provided to them by the SOLMC. Respondents from the community organizations indicated that initially, however, there was a lack of uniformity in the information provided by the SOLMC. For example, these respondents indicated that some SOLMC employees were unfamiliar with the fundamental elements or the parameters of the Support Fund and sometimes sought to become involved in the internal operations of the community organizations.

According to the SOLMC, part of the initial confusion arose from the need to develop appropriate policies or practices on the run. Also, the managers and officials of the SOLMC feel that the community organizations do not always appreciate the requirements of the LMP and what is involved in managing contribution agreements and public funds. Since the initial period, however, various practices have been put in place, expectations have been clarified and there is better collaboration as a result. Education was needed on both sides and, from all indications, it seems to have occurred to a large degree.

The Quebec community table of the Anglophone Committee indicated that it is very satisfied in general with its relationship with the SOLMC and the latter's support. They did note, however, that they are experiencing pressure from the SOLMC to focus the Committee's strategic plan on job creation so that the SOLMC can justify its investment. As discussed under indicator #3, the community table is more interested in focusing initially on community capacity building and community economic development.

**A minority of the managers of the delegated organizations felt that there continues to be a lack of uniformity in the information provided by the SOLMC**

Although most of the managers of delegated organizations reported a positive evolution in the training and support provided to them by the SOLMC, a minority feel that there continues to be significant discrepancies in the accuracy, consistency and timeliness of information provided by the SOLMC.

Some managers of the delegated organizations have considerable concerns about staff turnover at the SOLMC. In some cases, they were assigned four different officers over three years. They noted that each new person has to be brought up to date on the context and the evolution of the delegated organization's contribution agreement and has to be educated about the fundamental principles and practices of the Support Fund.

The SOLMC is aware of these concerns and attributes its staff turnover to two factors. First, employee turnover at HRSDC is currently very high in general. Second, uncertainty around the Support Fund's continuation and the positions at the SOLMC may prompt some employees to take other opportunities.[37]

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[36] In this section, the two community sides or tables are treated as both delegated organizations and training organizations, since they play both roles.

[37] As discussed under indicator #1.

As noted in the discussion of indicators #1 and #2, there has been growing concern in recent months around the Support Fund's renewal and funding under EBSM. Although very pleased with the Fund's renewal for 2002-2003 and 2003-2004, a number of organizations are worried about the narrowing of their programming options. They understand that these restrictions are intended to bring activities more in line with the EBSM but they are disappointed by the partial shift away from the initial intention of the Support Fund as defined by HRSDC when it was created on June 12, 1999.

**There is growing appreciation for the support provided by the community side of the Francophone Committee to the RDÉEs, except among a minority of Franco-Ontarian respondents**

In general, the RDÉEs appreciate the services and support they receive from the Francophone Committee. Although this support was considered to be somewhat uneven initially, the situation has been better for more than a year. The strategic sectors are operating more effectively (as discussed in more detail under indicator #9) and the officers from the same sector get together regularly to obtain and share information and to plan. There is ongoing direct support and the special assistance provided by the officer on loan from the SOLMC and the facilitation role of that person in terms of access to the various HRSDC programs is appreciated. A number of respondents are reassured by the remodelling of the Gazel.ca protocol, which included placing Gazel.ca under the direct control of the community side and changing its direction to make it more useful to the RDÉEs, their partners and entrepreneurs. The RDÉEs are generally happy with the project to create an enhanced community economic development training program. The RDÉEs and their partners also greatly appreciate the Lauriers de la PME Awards because of the pride, increased knowledge and sharing of experiences that these awards generate.

As discussed under indicator #4, some of the Ontario respondents are less pleased with the support from the community side of the Francophone Committee. In their view, there is interference rather than support.

**About half of the CEDEC members who participated in either the interview or written questionnaire were satisfied with the support provided to them by the community table of the Anglophone Committee, while a minority of the respondents were not at all satisfied**

Although the CEDECs are not yet delegated organizations, some, if not all, may eventually become so. At present, they receive services and resources through the community table. Each one has access to the services of a REDO. REDOs that have been in place since the beginning have received some 50 hours of training to date and feel that they have been well trained by the community table. Communication within the organization has improved and the systems and tools developed by the community table are seen as useful by its employees and managers. The support provided by the community table was considered satisfactory by half of the CEDEC members who participated in the telephone interviews and by slightly more than half of the members consulted by the questionnaire. However, a minority of the respondents seriously questioned both the training and the support provided.

## *Indicator #6: Quality of the administration and management of the contribution agreements by the organizations*

**For the most part, the steps being taken by the delegated organizations and the oversight of the SOLMC appear to offer effective management of the contribution agreements, although some of the managers of the delegated organizations consider the oversight of the SOLMC to be excessive at times**

Almost all of the managers of delegated organizations stated that they have the expertise and experience necessary for the sound management of the contribution agreements and confirm that they have put in place accounting and financial systems to ensure such sound management. As noted under indicator #5d, some respondents use the reporting process required by the SOLMC as a tool to assist in their management activities.

Respondents to the written questionnaire assigned a positive rating of 3.12 out of 4 to the question regarding the degree to which the RDÉEs and CEDECs have the ability, resources and skills needed to help the community further its economic development capacity and thus carry out its mandate under the contribution agreement funded by the Support Fund. (See Question 7 of the questionnaire in Appendix A).

In general, the SOLMC expressed satisfaction with the delegated organizations' management and maintains relatively tight oversight. If minor administrative shortcomings are identified, the SOLMC prescribes corrective action. In other instances, where the capacity of the management team is relatively weak, the SOLMC has reduced the amount of the contribution agreement until the situation has stabilized. Delegated organizations subject to such precautionary measures reported that they are not always informed of the reasons for them. In one case where the organization was experiencing instability, the Department appears to have been reluctant to step in, indicating that it did not want to interfere in the internal operations of the delegated organizations.

On their own initiative during the interviews, a small majority of community partners in Quebec and a few respondents from Francophone communities expressed concerns about the choices being made by the Anglophone Committee's community table and the RDÉEs respectively with respect to the use of the available funds. These respondents believe that too much money is being spent on excessive administrative processes and too many internal meetings and in hiring too many employees, to the detriment of direct investment in the development of communities. A review of the activity reports supports these concerns.

## *Indicator #7: Quality and adequacy of data collection and processing systems*

This indicator was reviewed using two sub-indicators.

### *#7a. Quality and adequacy of data collection and processing systems by the SOLMC, in relation to the objectives of the Support Fund*

In general, each of the 18 contribution agreement files reviewed by the evaluation contained the following:

- an "Executive summary – Analysis and recommendation", which is a summary prepared by SOLMC analysts to support their recommendation to department managers on each funding application;
- the contribution agreement; and
- activity reports.

The analysis of these files examined nine factors, as shown in Exhibit 2. These factors included some related to the quality and adequacy of data collection and processing systems by the SOLMC.

**Exhibit 2**

**Findings From the Analysis of the Files for Eighteen Contribution Agreements**

| Factor | Findings |
|---|---|
| 1. Degree of consistency between the objectives of the funding application (contribution agreement) and the Support Fund's objectives | The consistency between the Support Fund's objectives and the undertakings in the contribution agreements is high in 16 of the 18 cases. |
| 2. Degree of substitution for or duplication of other federal, provincial and other funding sources and degree of complementarity/synergy | There is no substitution or duplication discernible from the contribution files. |
| 3. Extent and nature of the contributions from partners | Several files mention the development of partnerships, some with in kind contributions and others with investments. Very few specify the expected amounts. |
| 4. Extent of the economic impact of the contribution agreement | The creation of 12 RDÉEs and the definition and implementation of the strategic plan within the Francophone and Acadian communities set the stage for significant economic impact.<br>The establishment of eight CEDECs and the definition and implementation of the strategic plan in the minority Anglophone community set the stage for a more limited developmental impact, the economic aspect of which is less evident given the direction adopted by the community table. |
| 5. Contribution to the development of the four priority sectors of the appropriate national committee | The executive summary only mentions the strategic priorities without indicating the deliverables associated with each one. |
| 6. Degree of definition of the expected results in connection with the agreement | All of the files include a list of expected results. However, there is wide variation in the specificity and operationalization of these results. A small minority of files describes the expected results with enough precision to link them to performance indicators in order to determine the degree to which they are achieved. |

| Factor | Findings |
|---|---|
| 7. Degree of consultation and involvement of the community in the programming inherent in the agreement | In general, the files do not mention the consultations that may have preceded the preparation of the funding application. |
| 8. Quality and adequacy of the support provided to the delegated organization to develop and implement the agreement | Given their composition, the files suggest that the SOLMC did not provide a guide or reporting framework to support the delegated organizations and to standardize the information, which would have increased its usefulness and the data comparability. |
| 9. Regularity and quality of the delegated organization's accountability | The SOLMC's directives on reporting by the delegated organizations were not always communicated effectively and were even less often well understood.<br>The number of reports submitted varies widely from file to file and the quality is unequal and inadequate, although it is slightly better on the Anglophone Committee side. |

### Although the summaries prepared by SOLMC analysts and the contribution agreements mention the strategic priorities or directions, these file documents do not mention the corresponding deliverables

The contribution agreements and "Executive summaries – Analysis and recommendation" prepared by SOLMC analysts indicated the strategic priorities or directions for the funding arrangement under the Support Fund. These file documents did not, however, indicate the corresponding deliverables. This omission leaves the door open to a somewhat vague interpretation of the deliverables that should be associated with the funding.

### The SOLMC has not set out clear and measurable objectives and has not been making use of performance indicators

The analysis of the contribution files, logic model, Results-based Management and Accountability Framework and other official documents shows that the SOLMC has not set out clear and measurable objectives. Some examples of this are noted below.

- Activity level indicators[38] (number of meetings, etc.) and performance indicators with respect to the Support Fund's objectives (number of partners, number of jobs) are listed under a single heading.
- The Support Fund's logic model identifies the long-term results as follows: "The Official Language Minority Communities are economic forces in their localities". It goes on to say, "In measurement terms this would imply improved economic strength". The logic framework and what is meant by "economic strength" have not been clearly defined.
- The SOLMC refers to the Support Fund as an "enabling fund" to explain the Support Fund's goals and its own decisions, but it has not provided a functional and operational definition of what an enabling fund is.

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[38] "Indicators of activity levels" should not be confused with "performance indicators", the latter being assessed on the actualization of the two objectives of section 41 in terms of economic development and employability.

The SOLMC developed a Results-based Management and Accountability Framework in April 2001. The framework included performance indicators that are associated with the Support Fund objectives.

It should be noted that the contribution agreement files examined by the evaluation were for agreements signed prior to April 2001. Although all the files include a list of expected results, there is a wide variation in the specificity and operationalization of these results. In addition, only a minority of files described the expected results with enough precision to link them to performance indicators.

Without clear and measurable objectives and the use of a corresponding framework of performance indicators, it will be difficult for the delegated organizations, national committees and the SOLMC to measure their progress and determine the impacts of the Support Fund.[39]

**The activity reports produced by the delegated organizations are of marginal value**

The review of the activity reports contained in the files identified certain shortcomings. In general, the reviewed reports consisted of lists of meetings and activities. The reports did not contain any analysis of the progress made toward achievement of the undertakings in the contribution agreements, the identification of challenges or special opportunities, or an evaluation of the results achieved. Overall, there was no standardization of the content, and the usefulness of these reports varied. The SOLMC and the two national committees do not appear to have specified the intended purpose and uses of these reports other than to justify the transfer of funds.

**The SOLMC and the national committees have not developed an integrated data collection system that would facilitate the documentation and analysis of progress towards achievement of Support Fund objectives**

Other than the contribution agreement files and the financial reports, the SOLMC does not appear to have an integrated data collection system that would facilitate the documentation and analysis of progress toward achievement of the Support Fund's objectives.

### *#7b. Quality and adequacy of data collection and processing systems by the delegated organizations, in relation to the objectives of the Support Fund*

**The development of data collection systems appear to be in the very early stage and performance indicators were not being used by the delegated organizations**

It was difficult, as part of the present evaluation, to determine the scope and adequacy of the data collection systems of the delegated organizations because the evaluation was undertaken to examine the Support Fund and not the delegated organizations. However, information gathered during the interviews, from the review of the contribution agreement activity reports and from the documentation review indicates that the data collection systems are still in the very early stage, at best, and are tied to lists of activities and projects rather than to performance indicators.

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[39] The SOLMC and the two national committees will be unable to determine the impact of the Support Fund in three or four years time unless they define at the outset the nature of the intended results, whether that is the number of businesses created, the multiplier effect of the funds invested, or the scope of the economic activity, and so forth. Unless the starting point is determined, that is, the level of these factors in June 1999, it will be difficult to measure what progress occurs.

The inadequacy of the quality and quantity of relevant data is also reflected in the difficulty that several of the delegated organizations and the SOLMC have in providing more precise information on the outcomes of the Support Fund. Without data collection and processing systems, it will be difficult for the national committees, the RDÉEs and the CEDECs to measure the progress of their work and the impact that it has on the economic vitality of their communities.

### *Indicator #8: Relevance of the organizational structures of the delegated and dependent organizations based on the Support Fund's objectives, including integration of the key community economic development and employability stakeholders*

**The delegated and dependent organizations form a Canada-wide infrastructure that is consistent with the Support Fund's short-term objectives of strengthening and establishing partnership networks and supporting the Francophone and Anglophone Committees**

The two national committees, the 12 RDÉEs and the eight CEDECs were either created or enhanced to help advance the economic development and employability of the Official Language Minority Communities. According to the vast majority of respondents, all of these interconnected components form a Canada-wide infrastructure for community economic development and employability for Official Language Minority Communities.

**The existence and operation of the Francophone Committee is consistent with the Support Fund's objectives of strengthening and establishing partnership networks in support of Official Language Minority Communities**

The Francophone Committee is a joint committee co-chaired by a member of the community side and an HRSDC senior official. The government side is composed of a representative from each of the nine departments that signed the memorandum of understanding. The community side also has nine members generally representing the business community, with three members from Western Canada, three from Ontario and three from the Atlantic region. The work of the Francophone Committee is supported by a community secretariat and the SOLMC.

The federal institutions represented on the Francophone Committee share information among themselves and with the Francophone and Acadian communities.

The national Francophone structure operates quite well and is greatly appreciated by the Francophone and Acadian respondents.

**Two issues identified for the Francophone Committee are the uneven level of financial commitment to economic development among the federal institutions represented on the Committee and concerns about the selection of members for the community side for Ontario**

The level of financial commitment to economic development among the federal institutions represented on the Francophone Committee is uneven. Several institutions appear to be letting HRSDC carry the load, although this is not the case with the Department of Western Economic Diversification and recently Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Canadian Heritage.

The evidence suggests that the uneven level of financial commitment among federal institutions has implications for the delegated organizations and HRSDC. Interview respondents from 11 of the 15 organizations directly involved (i.e. the 12 RDÉEs, the two national committees and HRSDC) reported that the lack of a greater commitment by the other institutional members limits the scope of the Francophone Committee's work and the potential synergies that could be generated by the Support Fund. In the case of HRSDC, this situation places the Department in the difficult role of playing a large part in an initiative that exceeds the parameters of the Department's mandate to some degree, especially in the area of economic development. (This issue is examined in more detail under indicator #11).

Four Franco-Ontarian respondents who are members of organizations with an economic mandate questioned the representativeness and the selection process of the members for the community side for Ontario (as discussed under indicator #4).

**The existence and operation of the RDÉEs is consistent with the objectives of strengthening and establishing partnership networks in support of Official Language Minority Communities**

In general, there are three models of RDÉE organizational structure in the Francophone and Acadian communities.

**a) Responsibilities assumed by an existing agency**: In the Western provinces, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, responsibility for the operation of the RDÉE was assumed by existing economic development agencies. In most of these cases, coordinating or consultation committees have been set up to ensure the geographic and/or sectoral representativeness of the RDÉE. The effectiveness of these consultation structures varies: they are appreciated by some partners and criticized by other members of the community who question how well the structures are working. In one case in particular, a delegated organization that is located in a sub-region of the province appears to be having significant difficulty transforming itself into a provincial organization and attracting the involvement of persons from other regions. In another case, the RDÉE served as a catalyst and enabled several organizations to work together on economic development. In a third case, the RDÉE consultative committee lost the majority of its members.

**b) Launched by a spokesperson organization:** In Newfoundland and Labrador and the three Northern Canadian territories, spokesperson organizations from the respective Francophone communities have taken charge of the operation of the RDÉE, which is incorporated as an activity sector in their organizational structure. Given the small populations and the limited capacity to act at the present time, it was considered advisable for the spokesperson organization to launch the RDÉE, define its economic development strategy and ensure its implementation.

**c) Created as a new organization:** In two provinces, the RDÉEs were created from scratch. In Nova Scotia, the creation of the RDÉE encountered difficulties but resulted in the realignment of the dynamic forces; this movement is supported by a majority of respondents. In Ontario, the RDÉE function was initially assumed by an existing organization. However, the impasse that quickly developed between that organization and some of its sister organizations, on the one hand, and the Francophone Committee on the other hand, put a stop to this arrangement and eventually led to the creation of the current Ontario RDÉE.[40] This RDÉE includes three regional components in the north, south and east. Four organizations active in economic development are members of the board of directors. Although satisfied with the RDÉE's structure, some community respondents are worried about what they see as the excessive control exercised by these four organizations and the confusion that arises from it in terms of the RDÉE's role and identity.

Respondents to the written questionnaire gave a positive rating of 2.91 out of 4 to the question regarding the degree to which the key stakeholders in economic development and employability have been brought together. (See Question 9 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). The rating given by the RDÉE members was somewhat higher (3.00), while the rating given by the RDÉE partners was slightly lower (2.90). It is difficult to understand the relatively low rating from RDÉE partners since the interviews and documentation review indicated the opposite, that is, a very high level of integration for organizations with an economic mandate.[41]

Respondents to the written questionnaire gave a positive rating of 3.03 out of 4 to the question regarding the degree to which the communities and relevant economic development stakeholders in the region, province or territory were consulted on the selection of the members for the RDÉE or CEDEC. (See Question 4 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). A high proportion of the RDÉE members who answered the questionnaire believe that communities and relevant stakeholders were adequately consulted in the selection of the people to sit on the RDÉE steering committees (with a rating of 3.34). This proportion was positive but significantly lower in the case of RDÉE community partners (with a rating of 2.81).

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[40] Following a third-party evaluation, the Ontario RDÉE reorganized itself to be more inclusive and representative of all regions of the province.

[41] This discrepancy can perhaps be explained by the probability that RDÉE partners are not fully aware of this integration.

## The structures of the Anglophone Committee and the CEDECs are still evolving

The present composition of the Anglophone Committee will change with the upcoming involvement of six federal institutions under the new memorandum of understanding. The community table consists of one representative from each of the eight CEDECs[42] and one from each of the eight regional organizations.[43] In addition to the usual executive and administrative structures, the Anglophone Committee also has four permanent sector working groups, including one on community capacity building, which is the most advanced.

Over the past three years, each of the eight CEDECs has been established with the on-site support of a REDO. The CEDECs are not incorporated, although a report on this issue is apparently to be completed shortly. At present, the community table is the only organization signing the contribution agreements with the Department. It supports the development and work of the CEDECs by providing a REDO and a small operating budget.

The activities of the CEDECs in the field include numerous meetings with various individuals and community organizations to raise awareness and visibility, participation in an extensive community consultation on the overall development of a region, involvement in creating a call centre, sponsorship of various school competitions including a competition to develop a logo for a CEDEC, support for the development of Local Action Groups,[44] working with a community to beautify a main street, support for the expansion of a cooperative selling artistic tourism products, and participation in the development of social action plans.

Interview respondents from within the existing structure are very satisfied with it and believe that the CEDECs are closely connected to their communities. The community table describes them as follows: "These regionally based, volunteer committees represent the National Committee (Anglophone Committee) at the local level. They act as community facilitators by creating opportunities for communities to come together, recognize their existing assets, develop a common vision, and gain access to the public and private-sector partners who can help them realize their vision."[45]

## Two issues identified for the CEDEC's are the lack of participation of organizations with an economic mandate and the lack of consultations when CEDEC members are selected

The Support Fund calls for the involvement of the key economic development stakeholders in the communities, both individuals and enterprises. The interviews indicated that there is little involvement of economic development agencies in the

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[42] The Community Table is presently examining the value of creating additional CEDECs for under-represented regions. The number of CEDECs may increase to 11.

[43] Over the years, the Anglophone minority community in Quebec has established eight regional associations representing the eight geographic regions of Quebec. These eight associations work together through the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN).

[44] Local Action Groups are local groups that come together to deal with a specific issue of local interest, very often of a social or community nature.

[45] Source: *A Community Capacity-Building Toolkit for Quebec's English-speaking Communities*, published by the Anglophone Committee's Community Table.

CEDECs,[46] sometimes by design. Some REDOs reported that they are not seeking the direct involvement of these agencies because the CEDECs are focusing their energies on community capacity building rather than on economic development. A number of CEDEC and community respondents are concerned about the relatively marginal involvement of organizations with an economic mandate and entrepreneurs, which is the case in the majority of CEDECs.

As noted above, respondents to the written questionnaire gave a positive rating of 2.91 out of 4 to the question regarding the degree to which the key stakeholders in economic development and employability have been brought together. (See Question 9 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). The rating was slightly positive (2.60) for the Anglophone community (which refers to members or employees of the Anglophone Committee, the REDOs and CEDEC volunteer members and an external partner), which corroborates the information provided by the interviews.

Also as noted above, respondents to the written questionnaire gave a positive rating of 3.03 out of 4 to the question regarding the degree to which the communities and relevant economic development stakeholders in the region, province or territory were consulted on the selection of the members for the RDÉE or CEDEC. (See Question 4 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). The rating slipped into the negative range (2.40) in the case of the Anglophone community, however, indicating that a majority of Anglophone respondents to the written questionnaire believes that this consultation was inadequate. The REDOs and CEDEC members interviewed confirmed that CEDEC members are recruited on a volunteer basis without widespread consultation.

**An issue identified for the SOLMC and the two national committees is responding to the lack of training and experience of many stakeholders in the delegated organizations**

In both the Francophone and Anglophone communities, the establishing of RDÉEs and CEDECs created a need for human resources and expertise in community economic development, whether in the form of managers, development officers or technicians. In many instances, the pool of resources was too small, which meant that a number of individuals were hired who did not have any relevant training and/or appreciable experience in the community economic development or employability fields. The limited expertise and non-specific skill set of their workforce prompted the two national committees and the RDÉEs to develop training programs. The Francophone Committee also introduced a strategy of collaboration between its sector officers.

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[46] Some CEDECs interact with Local Development Committees (LDC) and the Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDC).

# *5. Preliminary Results and Enabling Effects of the Support Fund*

This section of the report highlights the main findings for the five performance indicators that were used to examine the achievement of the short and medium-term objectives and the enabling effects of the Support Fund.

One of the anticipated outcomes of the Support Fund is the generating of enabling effects in Official Language Minority Communities that will lead to a sustainable economic development infrastructure. Enabling effects in the economic field refer to all policies, programs, interventions or investments that will contribute to the development or improving of the institutional infrastructure of communities. Enabling effects also include any instrument that will enable communities to take control of and generate sustainable community economic growth, such as the definition of development strategies, the mobilization of the dynamic forces of communities, the improvement of employability, the creation of jobs, the creation or enhancement of cooperatives, strategic and business partnerships, and, over time, the assembling of a critical mass of capital.

## *Indicator #9: Degree of achievement of undertakings in the contribution agreements*

### A high degree of achievement towards establishing a supporting infrastructure was evident under the first 18 contribution agreements

The Francophone Committee's annual reports document the many achievements of the Committee and the RDÉEs during the first three years of the Support Fund. These achievements included the establishment of the RDÉEs, the development of strategic planning by the national committee and the RDÉEs, the creation of intervention teams and the development of four sectoral strategies. The progress of the RDÉEs varies depending on when they were created and the critical mass of the available dynamic forces.[47] Some of the RDÉEs are now fully organized and have progressed in their development from the organizational stage to the in-field intervention stage. RDÉEs that were established more recently are in the process of finalizing their strategic planning.

Several RDÉEs intervened first in the tourism sector. Others established a business incubator, local economic development structures,[48] and partnerships. The short-term accomplishments in the area of tourism and support for business development may be effective in helping to achieve the long-term objectives of the Support Fund.

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[47] The critical mass of enterprises and expertise available within the communities on which the RDÉEs can depend to build an economic development infrastructure varies widely.

[48] For example, the Manitoba Economic Development Corporations.

According to a number of managers of delegated organizations and a few federal officials, the RDÉEs have had a major impact on the way in which decision-makers, including provincial governments, perceive their Francophone community. In their view, the perception of these communities is beginning to change from that of lobby groups to that of partners in the economic development of their province.

As a caution, however, it should be noted that RDÉE interview respondents who answered the question regarding the RDÉE's capacity to implement contribution agreements indicated that there has been some levelling off of the expertise in the field of community economic development, which in some cases is creating delays in the achievement of concrete results.

In the case of the Anglophone Committee, respondents from the community table and HRSDC indicated that there was some initial confusion over the role of such an infrastructure in Quebec. The restructuring that followed and the completion of the needs assessment[49] facilitated some catch-up and the development of key organizational tools. The community table states that it has made major progress in creating momentum within the Anglophone community despite its slow start. Specific examples of achievements include the establishment of the CEDECs and progress in identifying strategic directions. Respondents also identified some concrete or imminent achievements in community economic development in Quebec, including the collaboration of the CEDEC in the creation of a call centre that will employ some 500 people in the Gaspé,[50] the development of a cooperative for the marketing of tourism and cultural products on Îles-de-la-Madeleine, the Parc Mont O'Brien project and the study of the problems facing the forestry and fishing industries.

**Although progress is being made, a number of challenges have been encountered or noted in attempting to translate each of four strategic priorities of the Francophone Committee into concrete results for communities**

The four strategic sectors identified by the Francophone Committee are the knowledge-based economy, rural development, tourism, and the integration of youth in economic development. Sector strategies have been developed along with a framework for the focused interaction of sector agents.

The interviews indicate that the tourism sector has received the most attention of the four sectors and is the most advanced. At the time of the evaluation, a number of national initiatives were about to begin or were already under way. The interviews also indicate, however, that a small number of tourism development projects in Western Canada that were doing well last year have slowed somewhat due to a lack of organizational and/or financial resources. Other initiatives, such as the Francophone Pan-Canadian Tourism

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[49] This needs assessment, entitled Community Economic Development Perspectives: Needs Assessment Report on the Diverse English Linguistic Minority Communities Across Quebec, was conducted in spring 2000 by the Anglophone Committee at the request of HRSDC.

[50] Respondents reported that at one point the American promoter questioned locating this major project in the Gaspé because of an inadequate pool of English-speaking workers, according to the information available to him. The CEDEC helped save the project by providing a list of potential candidates in the region, a list that reassured the investor. Actively contributing to the creation of 500 jobs in a remote region like the Gaspé is an important accomplishment.

Corridor,[51] are taking longer than expected to get off the ground but will in all likelihood go ahead.

The rural development sector has recently benefited from structuring assistance from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Agricultural Rural Minority Language Community Planning Initiative with the support of Canadian Heritage through the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official Language Communities. This initiative is the result of a mobilization effort by Francophone Committee and its partners, and is intended to promote a strategic visioning exercise by some 60 rural communities across the country. It is also seen by some as a major change in approach for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. At the same time, however, this initiative has raised strong concerns among RDÉE managers who consider the allocated funds ($25,000) inadequate and the timelines too short to mobilize the dynamic forces required to carry out viable strategic planning. In addition, there is concern that a large number of people will become involved in developing interesting plans but that there will be no money to put those plans into action.

For a majority of RDÉEs, getting a foothold in the knowledge economy sector is a major challenge. It is difficult to bring together the minimum conditions for success in this sector, including the technological infrastructures to link Francophone communities to the major knowledge highways. Several RDÉEs have begun working cautiously in this sector through such activities as workshops in French on e-business in Ontario, a mentoring software package in Saskatchewan and the Carrefour virtuel d'affaires nunavois in Nunavut. A number of much larger projects are also emerging, such as the Centres d'opportunités en économie du savoir in Nova Scotia and the Communauté ingénieuse de la péninsule acadienne in New Brunswick. Another example is the Comités d'accès project which is aimed at establishing the necessary infrastructures for high speed Internet in Manitoba.

The Francophone Committee's Gazel.ca portal[52] carried out a thorough review of its orientation and activities after a year of operation. The review confirmed the need for a remodelling. In fall 2001, the Community Secretariat took over direct control of Gazel and completely changed what it was doing and how. Since then, the Gazel team has been working to complete this change in direction and to make this tool more useful to the RDÉEs, their partners and entrepreneurs in order to support the efforts of Francophone communities in the knowledge economy. The Gazel team is focused on the following:

- planning, organizing and implementing networks of sector officers within the RDÉEs as a means of supporting them in carrying out their respective mandates;
- supporting the RDÉEs in adapting the Gazel.ca tools to achieve their sector mandate;
- providing ongoing support to sector officers, acting as a catalyst in the creation and maintenance of sector networks and, through its very existence, the emergence of sector and virtual communities of interest; and

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[51] *Via-TVA*, a weekly show produced by three Francophone production houses that looks at Francophone and Acadian tourism enterprises, among other topics, is a positive example of what is happening in this sector.

[52] The Gazel.ca portal promotes the four sectors and is a tool for supporting the Francophone Committee's collaboration strategy by creating virtual networks, among other things. The knowledge-based economy strategy has four components, including one that may be linked in part to Gazel.ca: building awareness of e-business.

- supporting and assisting in the realization of the objectives of the Francophone Committee's renewed plan.[53]

RDÉE and community respondents report a positive change in attitude toward the Gazel.ca protocol. Originally sceptical, they are showing more interest, even though use and impact of the tool is still modest. The few businesspersons interviewed who have had an opportunity to use the services of the Gazel team are very pleased.

The youth sector is presenting a special challenge for several of the delegated organizations. There appears to be some confusion about whether the youth sector should receive specific strategic planning or whether it should be dealt with as a complementary component of the other priorities. That having been said, the RDÉE respondents identified a number of promising initiatives, including a mentoring program in one region and the start-up by youth of budding businesses in several provinces.

**The Anglophone Committee is directing most of its energy to the area of community capacity building as a first step toward community economic development**

The four strategic directions identified by the Anglophone Committee are community capacity building, communications, youth and job creation, and economic diversification. A permanent working group has been set up to provide a framework for each of the strategic directions.

The community table employees reported that most of their energy is directed to community capacity building. The review of the *Community Capacity Building Toolkit for Anglophone Minority Communities in Quebec*, which is a toolkit for supporting activities in this sector, confirms that the focus is more on social development as a first step toward community economic development.

According to the Anglophone Committee's managers and employees, community capacity building encompasses and supports the other sectors of activity and sets the overall direction. In addition to the tools that they have developed, they favour a global approach with a strong social orientation and the long-term mobilization of the community. They support the creation of Local Action Groups to identify needs and to act. To date, there has been no evaluation of the strategic plan developed to implement this priority.

Over the past year, the Anglophone Committee has allocated additional resources to communications. The review of the implementation strategy shows that it is more a strategy to improve communication internally within the network and externally with Anglophone communities than it is a strategic priority focused on developing the communications sector of the economy. The Anglophone Committee is in the process of developing TableNet, an "intranet" type of electronic network for communications within organizations.

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[53] Source: Gazel.ca presentation – April 5, 2002 presented by the Gazel.ca team.

Activities in the youth sector appear to be directed mainly at the school sector and at changing the perceptions that youth have of their socio-economic future and the conditions that determine their life choices including, according to the respondents, the decision to remain in Quebec. Efforts are focused primarily on social development. At the time of this evaluation, a strategic plan had not been developed to implement this priority.

In the case of the fourth priority sector – economic diversification – efforts to date appear to have been limited to the initiatives mentioned earlier, namely, a call centre and a marketing cooperative for tourism and cultural products. At the time of this evaluation, a strategic plan had not been developed to implement this priority.

### *Indicator #10: Influence of the Support Fund and mobilization of communities*

The analysis conducted for indicator #10 involved examining the level of knowledge and understanding of the Support Fund, examples of changes in the way stakeholders act in the community, and levels of satisfaction with the actions of the RDÉE and CEDECs.

**RDÉE managers have a relatively sound knowledge of the Support Fund, while the evidence suggests that RDÉE partners are somewhat less well informed**

RDÉE members who were respondents to the written questionnaire assigned a positive rating of 3.23 out of 4 to the question relating to their knowledge of the Support Fund's objectives, organizational structure and eligibility criteria for funding applications. (See Question 1 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). The rating was somewhat lower among RDÉE partners (3.11). The lower rating for RDÉE partners is consistent with the evidence (noted under indicator #4) suggesting that the goals and objectives of the Fund are still not fully understood by the communities.

The interviews provided further evidence of a positive but varied understanding of the Support Fund's objectives. For example, the vast majority of respondents were familiar with the general purpose of the Support Fund but some were unable to name specific objectives.

**Although respondents from the Anglophone community reported a high level of understanding of the Support Fund's objectives, their understanding appears to be based on the way the objectives were interpreted and applied by Anglophone Committee managers and employees**

The Anglophone community assigned a high positive rating to the question relating to knowledge of the Support Fund's objectives, organizational structure and eligibility criteria for funding applications (3.67). (See Question 1 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). At the same time, however, the interviews indicated that the understanding of the Support Fund's goals among the Anglophone community reflected the particular orientation given to it by the Anglophone Committee rather than the actual objectives of the Support Fund.

**The strategic plans developed by the delegated organizations and the related activities indicate that the Support Fund is helping to mobilize communities**

The strategic plans developed by the delegated organizations and the initiatives in the economic development field can be seen as the beginning of a change in thinking in several communities that are gradually taking control and becoming more aware that their vitality depends in large part on their economic health. This was corroborated by the interviews (as noted in the discussion of indicator #9). In particular, several respondents from the delegated organizations and HRSDC indicated that the structures created as a result of the Support Fund and the related activities resulted in a shift in the way in which economic development is approached in Francophone and Acadian communities.

The influence[54] of an initiative like the Support Fund depends in part on the importance attributed by third parties to its activities in the field. The majority of respondents who addressed this question indicated that they had seen concrete activities, while a minority of respondents had difficulty seeing any impact.

**The evidence indicates a positive level of satisfaction with the actions of the RDÉEs and CEDECs**

Respondents to the written questionnaire gave a positive rating of 3.07 out of 4 to the question relating to the level of satisfaction with the RDÉEs and CEDECs and the services provided by them under the Support Fund. (See Question 13 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). Comparing the ratings across the respondent categories indicates that the positive rating was highest among the RDÉE members (3.14) and lowest among the Anglophone community (2.91). This is consistent with the concerns expressed by some interview respondents from the CEDECs and the economy community side who felt that the direction of the Anglophone Committee should be reoriented toward economic development (as noted under indicator #3).

## *Indicator #11: Level of concrete and measurable commitment by federal institutions to the strategic plans of the two national committees, the RDÉEs and the CEDECs*

**There is room for increased involvement of federal institutions in terms of adapting their policies, programs and services to the economic development and employability needs of Official Language Minority Communities**

Respondents to the written questionnaire assigned a somewhat positive rating of 2.91 out of 4 to the question relating to the degree to which federal institutions have adapted their policies, programs and services to the economic development and employability needs of the Official Language Minority Communities. (See Question 6 of the questionnaire in Appendix A).

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[54] The extensive influence of the Support Fund, as demonstrated by the large number of external respondents who are aware of its existence and of the activities that it supports, is in itself an indicator of the evolution of its reach and provides information to community and government decision-makers on the decisions to be made. The opposite is also true in terms of the lack of awareness of the Support Fund found in certain regions where the activities of the delegated organizations are at the developmental stage, are poorly targeted or lack visibility.

Respondents from federal institutions expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the impact of the Support Fund on the economic enhancement and development of the Official Language Minority Communities.

By contrast, however, a considerable number of interview respondents from the delegated organizations expressed disappointment that some federal institutions with an economic mandate have not become involved or more involved in the economic development and employability of Official Language Minority Communities (as noted under indicators #1 and #8). For some respondents, this means that these institutions are not translating the commitment made when they signed the Francophone Committee's memorandum of understanding into concrete programs and measures. For example, these respondents believe that more extensive involvement by Industry Canada and ACOA is critical.

It should be noted, however, that the expression of disappointment is not directed at all federal institutions in the economic sector. Respondents in Western Canada are very pleased with the ongoing commitment of Western Economic Diversification Canada (WED). The new Agricultural Rural Minority Language Community Planning Initiative launched in late May 2001 by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, with the support of Canadian Heritage, is generally greatly appreciated by all interview respondents. According to respondents in Northern Ontario, since the arrival of the Northern component of the Ontario RDÉE in late 2001, FedNor[55] has shown an increased interest in the various ways of contributing more actively to the development strategies of Franco-Ontarian communities in the North.

The documentation review suggests that the inadequacy of specific programming for Francophones by institutions with an economic mandate in the Eastern and Central Southwest regions of Ontario may be a contributing factor in the dispute between some economic agencies of that province and the community side of the Francophone Committee.

The managers of the delegated organizations who answered the question claim that the SOLMC and the Francophone Committee use a somewhat heavy-handed approach when seeking help from federal and provincial institutions in starting up and supporting RDÉEs. In their view, the problem arises in part from the fact that institutions with an economic mandate[56] did not acquire sufficient resources and expertise to apply Part VII. These managers feel that it is crucial for institutions to set up a team with the necessary resources and authority to develop new programs and adapt existing ones and to support networking between all branches of the department. They consider the creating of this type of team to be the minimum requirement for success. The team also needs to be designed to reflect the scope of the institution's mandate and its critical role in the development of communities and to be given the authority necessary to mobilize the institutions. In their view, the existence of this type of team at HRSDC is one of the factors behind its success.

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[55] Launched in 1987, FedNor (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario) is an agency of Industry Canada. It helps develop programs and partnerships and contributes financially to initiatives in the North.

[56] Respondents from Francophone communities across Canada acknowledge the extremely positive effect of the synergy generated by the complementarity of the WED program and the Support Fund, including at the operational level, with the funding of special projects and especially with the Fonds d'investissements aux entreprises. The activities in question are similar to those of the Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) designed for majority communities.

For the majority of RDÉEs in Northern Canada, the problem is amplified by the fact that the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is the only department with an economic mandate active in the region. Respondents see the involvement of this department as essential. Enhancing its involvement will help to reduce a major barrier to the development of Official Language Minority Communities in the North.

When the Support Fund was created, it was clear that the Fund was targeting the activities and priorities defined by the memoranda signed with the two community sides and that it was not to be a substitute for other HRSDC programs or those of other federal institutions.[57] Managers from the community side of the Francophone Committee reported that when the Support Fund was first introduced, there was a strong trend toward substitution of the Support Fund for existing HRSDC programs. Following interventions by the Francophone Committee and the SOLMC, those respondents now have the impression that the problem has been corrected. The RDÉE respondents who addressed this question reported that the problem is still ongoing, however, and tends to limit access to other HRSDC programs. Other respondents from the delegated organizations believe that access to the Department's other programs is improving.

## *Indicator #12: Extent of the leverage effect of the contribution agreements and the resultant partnerships*

For the purposes of this evaluation, the leverage effect refers to the level of investment generated from all other sources in response to the amounts provided by the Support Fund. These are investments generated through the efforts of the dynamic forces that the contribution agreements brought together.

To determine the leverage effect, the evaluation examined the contribution agreement files and the concrete examples provided by the RDÉEs. The contribution agreement files usually mentioned the in-kind and monetary contributions of partners. The RDÉEs provided some examples of how their activities and experience allowed them to generate additional investments from private or other public partners to supplement Support Fund contributions.

**There is preliminary evidence that the Support Fund is leveraging complementary funding and activities to implement strategic plans**

Both the SOLMC and the Francophone Committee emphasize the need to transform funding from the Support Fund into additional investments by third parties, including federal, provincial and municipal institutions, financial institutions, community investors and private investors. In their view, this is an important factor in approving projects under the two-year extension of the Support Fund.

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[57] The last sentence in the preamble to the Support Fund's mandate is clear in this regard: "This new funding complements existing program funds at HRSDC and other federal departments."

In several provinces and territories, small investments in the tourism field have already been made or will be occurring in the near future as a result of resources made available by the Support Fund. According to the RDÉE respondents, these initial investments have served to open the doors to financial investment by the provinces in economic development. The amounts to date are quite small at less than $20,000 per investment, but they have served as incubators for provincial government/RDÉE partnerships. Some of these investments have also led governments to consider substantially larger projects. There are also reports from several provinces and territories of small or medium investments ($30,000 or more) by other departments, such as the economic development departments.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Agricultural Rural Minority Language Community Planning Initiative involves an investment of $1.5 million by the Department and an equivalent amount in kind by the official linguistic minority communities and other partners, including $1 million by Canadian Heritage.

Some projects are generating multi-party collaboration with a wide variety of investors. The Business Incubators Network in Manitoba, for example, fostered collaboration and financial investment from Canadian Heritage, HRSDC, the private sector and the Fondation de l'entrepreneurship du Québec, among others. According to Manitoba respondents, the incubator project generated additional investments of $ 652,000.

In the Gaspé, the imminent opening of the call centre involves a major investment.[58] The company is investing more than $1.5 million in addition to assuming the operating costs. Emploi Québec is contributing $3.7 and Investissement Québec is contributing $2.8 million.

In Nova Scotia, the RDÉE provided training courses and support toward the implementation of projects that generated $6 million in investments, with a large part coming from the private sector. For example, ACOA responded to a request from the RDÉE by contributing $100,000 to develop a course jointly with Collège de l'Acadie to train people to work in the ship building industry; builders had been having trouble finding qualified labourers. It is anticipated that this investment will generate 20 jobs that will have considerable effect on the economic vitality of the community.

In New Brunswick, an investment of $450,000 in the "major projects" category of the Support Fund is expected to leverage investments in excess of $2.5 million, including $1 million from Industry Canada and the provincial government respectively, to carry out the Communauté ingénieuse de la péninsule acadienne project.

Leverage effects have also occurred through the sharing of knowledge and success stories. For example, a high technology conference organized by the Secrétariat des affaires intergouvernementales canadiennes du Québec facilitated the transfer of technological knowledge and inspired the creation of a small technology business.

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[58] Given the amounts invested by the Quebec government and the company, the Gaspé CEDEC certainly cannot claim most of the responsibility for the arrival of the call centre in Baie-des-Chaleurs. However, the key role that it played illustrates the function of an enabling organization: it found itself in the right place at the right time with the crucial information and, most importantly, it knew how and chose to act. It was able to act because it was well connected to its community, was on top of developments and information, and was able to recognize that it had an opportunity to act.

Sharing success stories through national meetings, forums and the Gazel.ca protocol has shown the seeds for a number of other businesses. Gazel is beginning to serve as a gateway for commercialization and marketing.

Saskatchewan is presently developing an inventory of the jobs and businesses created through resources made possible by the Support Fund. A community agri-food business is being set up in a town in the northern part of the province to ensure that community's economic vitality; the project will involve significant investment from the private and community sectors. In Nunavut, partnerships have been created with the Musée Maritime du Québec, Nunavut Arctic College and the Nunavut Research Institute and the Hamlet of Pond Inlet. In British Columbia, a web site has been developed along with a series of tourism promotion products, including a CD-ROM. The provincial Department of Tourism has incorporated some of these elements into its own tourism promotion program. Alberta is the location for a program designed to help youth create their own businesses in school settings. In Newfoundland and Labrador, an agreement has been signed with the Department of Industry, Trade and Rural Development to publish and disseminate profiles of Francophone businesses.

The interviews also indicated that the existence of the Support Fund is creating synergies with other government and non-government programs and initiatives. The programs of Western Economic Diversification are an example of the synergies. The interviews also indicated that the Support Fund has helped to establish complementary activities and to build positive partnerships between federal Departments and Agencies, particularly Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, Canadian Heritage and HRSDC.

### *Indicator #13: Degree of growth in the capacity of communities to achieve the economic development and employability objectives of the Support Fund*

**There is preliminary evidence that the Support Fund has had a positive effect on community capacity for economic development and employment**

This statement is supported by the evidence presented under the indicator # 12. It is also supported by interviews and feedback through the written questionnaire.

Respondents to the written questionnaire gave a high positive rating of 3.55 out of 4 to the question of whether the Support Fund has had or may well have positive effects on economic development and employability in their region, province or territory. (See Question 2 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). Looking across the categories of respondents, this high positive rating ranged from 3.48 in the case of RDÉE members to 3.82 in the case of the Anglophone community.

Respondents to the written questionnaire also gave a high positive rating of 3.42 out of 4 to the question of whether the Support Fund has led or will lead to progress in economic development and employability that would not otherwise have been possible. (See Question 10 of the questionnaire in Appendix A). The high positive rating for this question ranged from 3.37 in the case of the RDÉE members to 3.58 in the case of the RDÉE partners.

Respondents also gave a high positive rating of 3.35 out of 4 to the question of whether the Support Fund has helped strengthen the CEDECs' or RDÉEs' ability to support the economic development and employability of Official Language Minority Communities in their region, province or territory. (See Question 11 of the questionnaire in Appendix A).

Many of the respondents from the delegated organizations, HRSDC and other institutions that signed the memorandum of understanding believe that the Support Fund has been effective. They indicated that the Support Fund has been a catalyst for economic development and a mechanism for leveraging the involvement of a wide array of players, including provincial governments, municipalities and economic development agencies. Also, the key stakeholders in the Support Fund have created a model of joint community/ government collaboration and action that is inspiring other government sectors.

Many of the respondents from the delegated organizations, HRSDC and RDÉE partners reported that the main success of the Support Fund has been to establish a structure and roots in all provinces and territories. This structure targets economic development across the country.

Several respondents from the delegated organizations believe that the Support Fund has strengthened the capacity of communities, despite the fact that most of the other development factors, such as demography, workforce concentration, critical mass of entrepreneurs, strong presence on the economic scene, the institutional network and others, are rather weak.

Respondents from the Francophone Committee believe that the Support Fund's success is due in part to the commitment of senior HRSDC officials to the application of Part VII and to the development of minority communities, as well as to the existence of the SOLMC. In their view, the developmental framework that has been put in place around the Support Fund has a significant impact on the ability of communities to assume control of their own economic development. They also feel that the SOLMC makes it possible to raise awareness among people in all areas of HRSDC.

**A number of factors were identified as likely to influence whether growth in community capacity will continue and be sustained, such as the ability to institutionalize the program and community structures, and a need for delegated organizations to improve their understanding of local labour market needs**

According to departmental and community respondents, some consideration will have to be given to fine-tuning the institutions in the communities since it is important to institutionalize the program and community structures to ensure sustainable development. Similarly, regarding the long-term capacity of their communities, RDÉE respondents to the written questionnaire indicated that they are relying on the Support Fund and its possible leverage effects on other funding sources to continue creating community economic development corporations and/or cooperatives.

As noted under indicator #2, there is a concern that the narrowing of the Support Fund's eligibility criteria is shifting the Support Fund from its original direction. The shift is considered to be significant because the original direction was determined after a long process of consultation and joint reflection, and it remains a cornerstone of the revitalization of Francophone and Acadian communities.

The ability of communities to take responsibility for their own economic development depends on knowledge of the strengths, weaknesses and internal dynamics of the communities. It depends on the knowledge that the leadership has of local workforce and labour market needs. Knowledge of the needs of the workforce and labour markets in Francophone and Acadian communities varies widely. In Quebec, the needs assessment process identified some of the needs of the Anglophone workforce but not in detail. Several RDÉEs report that they have not yet reached this stage in their development but that they are planning this type of assessment, subject to the availability of appropriate resources. Other RDÉEs indicate that they have access to this information from existing data banks.

The interviews indicated that in some regions, including Quebec, the Western provinces and the territories, it is difficult to motivate community members to become involved in the RDÉE's or CEDEC's action plan and that interest in this sector of activity is slow to take hold. This inability to mobilize community members limits the community's ability to act.

In provinces or territories where the minority population numbers are quite low, Support Fund officials will have to take into consideration in their future planning the development capacity of the communities, especially rural ones, and the realities of those communities. Examples of these realities include the vast territory, the wide dispersion of the population, the economic difficulties of communities, the rapid depopulation taking place (from rural regions and from the province), the effects on the economic infrastructure because of the drastic drop in the prices of agricultural products, and volunteer burnout.

The capacity of a community and its organizations to participate effectively in the economic sector depends in part on the ability to attract and retain those organizations. This ability varies among RDÉEs and CEDECs from highly effective to weak and depends on the specific conditions and dynamics of each community, the leadership in place and the community and public perception of whether the organization has the means and the intention to act in the economic sector. It is also a function of the usefulness of the proposed activities as perceived by the members of the community and the degree of their participation in determining those activities. The RDÉEs and CEDECs are facing a considerable challenge: the ability of their community to act will depend on the degree to which what they propose is understandable and seen as beneficial to members of the Official Language Minority Communities.

According to the Anglophone Committee's managers and employees, community capacity building encompasses and supports the other sectors of activity and sets the overall direction. In addition to the tools that they have developed, they favour a global approach with a strong social orientation and the long term mobilization of the community. For example, they support the creation of Local Action Groups to identify needs and to act.

As reported in the history of the Support Fund, since 1997 federal/provincial/community memoranda of understanding have been signed in several provinces, including Prince Edward Island, Alberta and Manitoba. Through those agreements, the RDÉEs in Manitoba and PEI have successfully built a collaborative relationship with their respective provincial governments and with a number of other federal institutions that were signatories to the agreements. The Support Fund has added resources to this tri-partite approach, thereby enhancing the capacity of the communities involved. Respondents from delegated organizations and from HRSDC who addressed the issue would like the existence of the resources generated by the Support Fund and the pooling of the department/community resources that it allows at the national level to facilitate the emergence of similar new agreements in other provinces.

# 6. General Conclusions

The Support Fund evaluation examined three main issues:

- the relevance of the Support Fund
- the design, delivery and implementation of the Fund; and
- the achievement of short and medium-term objectives and enabling effects on the Official Language Minority Communities.

The evaluation's data and analyses provided the following conclusions:

1. Interviews with members of federal departments, the two national committees and their delegated organizations and the review of documentation related to the Support Fund indicated that the Support Fund is consistent with section 41 or Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*.

2. Although the Support Fund is an LMP initiative under the EBSM, the analysis of documentation and interviews with members of the national committees, the delegated organizations and HRSDC indicates that a dichotomy exists between the mandate/objectives of the Support Fund and those of the EBSM, especially with respect to economic development. This dichotomy is contributing to the instability and uncertainty surrounding the Support Fund. The lack of long-term funding for the Support Fund is also contributing to the uncertainty.

3. The analysis of documentation, the contribution agreement files and interviews with stakeholders within and outside the delegated organizations indicates that the strategic plan and directions of the Francophone Committee are consistent with the mandate and objective of the Support Fund. It is less evident, however, that the Anglophone Committee's strategic plan is consistent because the Anglophone Committee has chosen to focus more on community capacity building. Part of the reason for this difference may be that the Support Fund was initially developed around the needs of Francophone Official Language Minority Communities.

4. The review of the management of the Support Fund identified several areas for improvement.

    - Although the approval process for the contribution agreements are generally considered to be working well, there is some concern that the administrative process is becoming burdensome.
    - There appears to be a lack of clarity or common understanding regarding the criteria and process for determining amounts for regular and major project contribution agreements.
    - There is a need to consider ways to improve monitoring and data collection systems.

5. The analysis of documentation, interviews and written questionnaires indicate that the Support Fund has helped to establish a national infrastructure that is consistent with

the Support Fund's short-term objectives of strengthening and establishing partnership networks in support of Official Language Minority Communities. At the same time, a number of issues were noted.

- There is room for increased involvement of federal departments and agencies that are members of the Francophone and Anglophone Committees.
- The structures of the Anglophone Committee and the CEDECs are still evolving. The present composition of the Anglophone Committee will also change with the involvement of six federal institutions under the Committee's new memorandum of understanding.
- Some respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the representativeness and/or the selection process for some of the organizations. For example, some Franco-Ontarian respondents questioned the representativeness and the process used by the Francophone Committee to select members of the community side for Ontario. In the case of the Anglophone Committee, a number of CEDEC and community respondents expressed concern about the low level of involvement of organizations with an economic mandate and entrepreneurs.
- Knowledge of local labour markets needs to be developed.

6. A high degree of achievement towards establishing a supporting infrastructure is evident under the first 18 contribution agreements. Some examples of these achievements included the establishment of the RDÉEs and CEDECs, the development of strategic planning and some short-term accomplishments in the area of tourism and support for business development.
7. There is preliminary evidence that the Support Fund is leveraging complementary funding and activities to implement strategic plans.
8. The analysis of documentation and interviews indicates that the Support Fund has, to some extent, mechanisms in place to minimize duplication with other federal initiatives.
9. The strategic plans developed by the delegated organizations and the related activities indicate that the Support Fund is helping to mobilize communities. The evidence also indicates a positive level of satisfaction among RDÉE members, RDÉE partners, and the Anglophone community with the actions of the RDÉEs and the CEDECs. Similarly, respondents to the written questionnaire indicated that they believe the Support Fund has been or will be effective in making progress in economic development and employability that would not otherwise have been possible.

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# Appendix A

## Comparison Chart of the Cumulative Results of the Responses to the Written Questionnaire

Note: As part of the questionnaire exercise, respondents were asked to assign a value between "a" and "d" to each question, where a=1 and d=4. Since the median value is 2.5, a rating below 2.5 is negative and a rating above 2.5 is positive, while a rating above 3.25 is very high. The figures in the left-hand column indicate the number of the performance indicator to which the question corresponds. The figures in the "Non applicable" column show the number of respondents who indicated that they did not have the necessary information to feel comfortable answering the corresponding question.

Comparison Chart of the Cumulative Results of the Responses to the Written Questionnaire

| Performance indicators | Questions | Average | Responses: RDÉE members | Responses: RDÉE partners | Responses: Anglophone community | Non applicable (number) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10 | Question 1. I am familiar with the Support Fund's objectives, organizational structure, and funding application eligibility criteria. | 3.24 | 3.23 | 3.11 | 3.67 | 3 |
| 13 | Question 2. The Support Fund has had or may well have positive effects in the future on economic development and employability in my region, province or territory. | 3.55 | 3.48 | 3.56 | 3.82 | 4 |
| 4 | Question 3. The four priority sectors identified in the Anglophone Committee or the Francophone Committee's strategic plan are effective means of development for the communities. | 3.49 | 3.45 | 3.55 | 3.45 | 5 |

### Comparison Chart of the Cumulative Results of the Responses to the Written Questionnaire

| Performance indicators | Questions | Average | Responses: RDÉE members | Responses: RDÉE partners | Responses: Anglophone community | Non applicable (number) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Question 4. The communities and the economic development stakeholders in my region, province or territory are consulted when CEDEC or RDÉE members are selected. | 3.03 | 3.34 | 2.81 | 2.40 | 19 |
| 5 | Question 5. The Support Fund funding application eligibility criteria are appropriate and will contribute to economic development leading eventually to job creation. | 3.40 | 3.41 | 3.37 | 3.40 | 15 |
| 11 | Question 6. The Support Fund has led federal institutions to adapt their policies, programs and services to the economic development and employability needs of the Official Language Minority Communities. | 2.91 | 3.08 | 2.79 | 2.67 | 13 |
| 6 | Question 7. The CEDEC or RDÉE in my region has the ability, resources and skills it needs to help the community develop its capacity, hence to carry out its mandate under the contribution agreement funded by the Support Fund. | 3.12 | 3.11 | 3.18 | 3.00 | 4 |
| 4 | Question 8. The CEDEC or RDÉE has a good understanding of my region's economic development and employability needs. | 3.21 | 3.16 | 3.36 | 3.00 | 4 |

### Comparison Chart of the Cumulative Results of the Responses to the Written Questionnaire

| Performance indicators | Questions | Average | Responses: RDÉE members | Responses: RDÉE partners | Responses: Anglophone community | Non applicable (number) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Question 9. The CEDEC or RDÉE has successfully brought together the key economic organizations in my region, province or territory around a common vision of what should constitute an economic development and employability plan. | 2.91 | 3.00 | 2.90 | 2.60 | 11 |
| 13 | Question 10. The Support Fund has led or will lead to progress in economic development and employability that would not have been possible otherwise. | 3.42 | 3.37 | 3.58 | 3.45 | 5 |
| 13 | Question 11. The Support Fund has helped strengthen the CEDECs' or RDÉEs' ability to support the economic development and employability of the Official Language Minority Communities in my region, province or territory. | 3.35 | 3.23 | 3.47 | 3.50 | 7 |
| 1 | Question 12. The Support Fund has made it possible to complete and/or to strengthen the economic development organizations and institutions of the Official Language Minority Communities. | 3.19 | 3.16 | 3.25 | 3.11 | 9 |
| 10 | Question 13. I am satisfied with the activities of the CEDEC or the RDÉE and with the services it provides under the Support Fund. | 3.07 | 3.14 | 3.03 | 2.91 | 6 |

# *Appendix B*

## *Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from RDÉE Community Members*

Note: The figures in columns A, B, C and D represent the number of respondents who indicated their choice for each of the questions. The number of respondents who chose a specific option is multiplied by the corresponding weighting factor shown in the row (A=1 means that the number of respondents who chose this response was multiplied by 1, and so forth). The result of these calculations for each question is shown in the "Average" column. The figures in column E represent the number of respondents who indicated that they did not have the necessary information to feel comfortable answering the corresponding question.

**Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from RDÉE Community Members**

| | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 | | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **QUESTIONS** | **Completely disagree** | **Partly disagree** | **Partly agree** | **Completely agree** | **AVERAGE** | **Non applicable** |
| Question 1. I am familiar with the Support Fund's objectives, organizational structure, and funding application eligibility criteria. | 4 | 2 | 17 | 20 | 3.23 | 2 |
| Question 2. The Support Fund has had or may well have positive effects in the future on economic development and employability in my region, province or territory. | 0 | 6 | 11 | 27 | 3.48 | 1 |
| Question 3. The four priority sectors identified in the Anglophone Committee's or the Francophone Committee's strategic plan are effective means of development for the communities. | 3 | 3 | 9 | 29 | 3.45 | 1 |
| Question 4. The communities and the economic development stakeholders in my region, province or territory are consulted when CEDEC or RDÉE members are selected. | 2 | 5 | 9 | 22 | 3.34 | 7 |

## Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from RDÉE Community Members

| | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 | | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUESTIONS | Completely disagree | Partly disagree | Partly agree | Completely agree | AVERAGE | Non applicable |
| Question 5. The Support Fund funding application eligibility criteria are appropriate and will contribute to economic development leading eventually to job creation. | 2 | 2 | 14 | 23 | 3.41 | 4 |
| Question 6. The Support Fund has led federal institutions to adapt their policies, programs and services to the economic development and employability needs of the Official Language Minority Communities. | 3 | 6 | 15 | 15 | 3.08 | 6 |
| Question 7. The CEDEC or RDÉE in my region has the ability, resources and skills it needs to help the community develop its capacity, hence to carry out its mandate under the contribution agreement funded by the Support Fund. | 4 | 5 | 17 | 18 | 3.11 | 1 |
| Question 8. The CEDEC or RDÉE has a good understanding of my region's economic development and employability needs. | 3 | 7 | 15 | 20 | 3.16 | 0 |
| Question 9. The CEDEC or RDÉE has successfully brought together the key economic organizations in my region, province or territory around a common vision of what should constitute an economic development and employability plan. | 7 | 6 | 9 | 20 | 3.00 | 3 |
| Question 10. The Support Fund has led or will lead to progress in economic development and employability that would not have been possible otherwise. | 3 | 3 | 12 | 25 | 3.37 | 2 |
| Question 11. The Support Fund has helped strengthen the RDÉEs' ability to support the economic development and employability of the Official Language Minority Communities in my region, province or territory. | 4 | 5 | 12 | 23 | 3.23 | 1 |

## Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from RDÉE Community Members

| | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 | | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUESTIONS | Completely disagree | Partly disagree | Partly agree | Completely agree | AVERAGE | Non applicable |
| Question 12. The Support Fund has made it possible to complete and/or to strengthen the economic development organizations and institutions of the Official Language Minority Communities. | 4 | 5 | 14 | 20 | 3.16 | 2 |
| Question 13. I am satisfied with the activities of the CEDEC or the RDÉE and with the services it provides under the Support Fund. | 5 | 7 | 9 | 23 | 3.14 | 1 |

# Appendix C

## Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from RDÉE Partners

Note: The figures in columns A, B, C and D represent the number of respondents who indicated their choice for each of the questions. The number of respondents who chose a specific option is multiplied by the corresponding weighting factor shown in the row (A=1 means that the number of respondents who chose this response was multiplied by 1, and so forth). The result of these calculations for each question is shown in the "Average" column. The figures in column E represent the number of respondents who indicated that they did not have the necessary information to feel comfortable answering the corresponding question.

**Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from RDÉE Partners**

| | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 | | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **QUESTIONS** | **Completely disagree** | **Partly disagree** | **Partly agree** | **Completely agree** | **AVERAGE** | **Non applicable** |
| Question 1. I am familiar with the Support Fund's objectives, organizational structure, and funding application eligibility criteria. | 2 | 2 | 21 | 10 | 3.11 | 1 |
| Question 2. The Support Fund has had or may well have positive effects in the future on economic development and employability in my region, province or territory. | 2 | 0 | 9 | 23 | 3.56 | 2 |
| Question 3. The four priority sectors identified in the Anglophone Committee's or the Francophone Committee's strategic plan are effective means of development for the communities. | 1 | 2 | 8 | 22 | 3.55 | 3 |
| Question 4. The communities and the economic development stakeholders in my region, province or territory are consulted when CEDEC or RDÉE members are selected. | 3 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 2.81 | 10 |

## Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from RDÉE Partners

| | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 | | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUESTIONS | Completely disagree | Partly disagree | Partly agree | Completely agree | AVERAGE | Non applicable |
| Question 5. The Support Fund funding application eligibility criteria are appropriate and will contribute to economic development leading eventually to job creation. | 2 | 0 | 11 | 14 | 3.37 | 9 |
| Question 6. The Support Fund has led federal institutions to adapt their policies, programs and services to the economic development and employability needs of the Official Language Minority Communities. | 3 | 5 | 16 | 5 | 2.79 | 7 |
| Question 7. The CEDEC or RDÉE in my region has the ability, resources and skills it needs to help the community develop its capacity, hence to carry out its mandate under the contribution agreement funded by the Support Fund. | 3 | 4 | 10 | 16 | 3.18 | 3 |
| Question 8. The CEDEC or RDÉE has a good understanding of my region's economic development and employability needs. | 1 | 3 | 12 | 17 | 3.36 | 3 |
| Question 9. The CEDEC or RDÉE has successfully brought together the key economic organizations in my region, province or territory around a common vision of what should constitute an economic development and employability plan. | 3 | 5 | 14 | 8 | 2.90 | 6 |
| Question 10. The Support Fund has led or will lead to progress in economic development and employability that would not have been possible otherwise. | 1 | 1 | 13 | 19 | 3.58 | 2 |
| Question 11. The Support Fund has helped strengthen the CEDECs' or RDÉEs' ability to support the economic development and employability of the Official Language Minority Communities in my region, province or territory. | 2 | 1 | 9 | 20 | 3.47 | 4 |

**Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from RDÉE Partners**

|  | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 |  | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUESTIONS | Completely disagree | Partly disagree | Partly agree | Completely agree | AVERAGE | Non applicable |
| Question 12. The Support Fund has made it possible to complete and/or to strengthen the economic development organizations and institutions of the Official Language Minority Communities. | 2 | 3 | 12 | 15 | 3.25 | 4 |
| Question 13. I am satisfied with the activities of the CEDEC or the RDÉE and with the services it provides under the Support Fund. | 4 | 3 | 13 | 12 | 3.03 | 4 |

# Appendix D

## Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from CEDECs, REDOs and Community Associations of the Anglophone Minority Community

Note: The figures in columns A, B, C and D represent the number of respondents who indicated their choice for each of the questions. The number of respondents who chose a specific option is multiplied by the corresponding weighting factor shown in the row (A=1 means that the number of respondents who chose this response was multiplied by 1, and so forth). The result of these calculations for each question is shown in the "Average" column. The figures in column E represent the number of respondents who indicated that they did not have the necessary information to feel comfortable answering the corresponding question.

**Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from CEDECs, REDOs and Community Associations of the Anglophone Minority Community**

| | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 | | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **QUESTIONS** | **Completely disagree** | **Partly disagree** | **Partly agree** | **Completely agree** | **AVERAGE** | **Non applicable** |
| Question 1. I am familiar with the Support Fund's objectives, organizational structure, and funding application eligibility criteria. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 3.67 | 0 |
| Question 2. The Support Fund has had or may well have positive effects in the future on economic development and employability in my region, province or territory. | 0 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 3.82 | 1 |
| Question 3. The four priority sectors identified in the Anglophone Committee's or the Francophone Committee's strategic plan are effective means of development for the communities. | 0 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 3.45 | 1 |

## Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from CEDECs, REDOs and Community Associations of the Anglophone Minority Community

|  | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 |  | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **QUESTIONS** | **Completely disagree** | **Partly disagree** | **Partly agree** | **Completely agree** | **AVERAGE** | **Non applicable** |
| Question 4. The communities and the economic development stakeholders in my region, province or territory are consulted when CEDEC or RDÉE members are selected. | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2.40 | 2 |
| Question 5. The Support Fund funding application eligibility criteria are appropriate and will contribute to economic development leading eventually to job creation. | 0 | 0 | 6 | 4 | 3.40 | 2 |
| Question 6. The Support Fund has led federal institutions to adapt their policies, programs and services to the economic development and employability needs of the Official Language Minority Communities. | 1 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 2.67 | 0 |
| Question 7. The CEDEC or RDÉE in my region has the ability, resources and skills it needs to help the community develop its capacity, hence to carry out its mandate under the contribution agreement funded by the Support Fund. | 1 | 0 | 9 | 2 | 3.00 | 0 |
| Question 8. The CEDEC or RDÉE has a good understanding of my region's economic development and employability needs. | 1 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3.00 | 1 |
| Question 9. The CEDEC or RDÉE has successfully brought together the key economic organizations in my region, province or territory around a common vision of what should constitute an economic development and employability plan. | 3 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 2.60 | 2 |

### Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire from CEDECs, REDOs and Community Associations of the Anglophone Minority Community

| | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 | | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **QUESTIONS** | **Completely disagree** | **Partly disagree** | **Partly agree** | **Completely agree** | **AVERAGE** | **Non applicable** |
| Question 10. The Support Fund has led or will lead to progress in economic development and employability that would not have been possible otherwise. | 0 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 3.45 | 1 |
| Question 11. The Support Fund has helped strengthen the CEDECs' or RDÉEs' ability to support the economic development and employability of the Official Language Minority Communities in my region, province or territory. | 1 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 3.50 | 2 |
| Question 12. The Support Fund has made it possible to complete and/or to strengthen the economic development organizations and institutions of the Official Language Minority Communities. | 0 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3.11 | 3 |
| Question 13. I am satisfied with the activities of the CEDEC or the RDÉE and with the services it provides under the Support Fund. | 2 | 0 | 6 | 3 | 2.91 | 1 |

# Appendix E

## Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire by all Respondents

Note: The figures in columns A, B, C and D represent the number of respondents who indicated their choice for each of the questions. The number of respondents who chose a specific option is multiplied by the corresponding weighting factor shown in the row (A=1 means that the number of respondents who chose this response was multiplied by 1, and so forth). The result of these calculations for each question is shown in the "Average" column. The figures in column E represent the number of respondents who indicated that they did not have the necessary information to feel comfortable answering the corresponding question.

**Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire by all Respondents**

| | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 | | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **QUESTIONS** | **Completely disagree** | **Partly disagree** | **Partly agree** | **Completely agree** | **AVERAGE** | **Non applicable** |
| Question 1. I am familiar with the Support Fund's objectives, organizational structure, and funding application eligibility criteria. | 6 | 5 | 40 | 39 | 3.24 | 3 |
| Question 2. The Support Fund has had or may well have positive effects in the future on economic development and employability in my region, province or territory. | 2 | 6 | 22 | 59 | 3.55 | 4 |
| Question 3. The four priority sectors identified in the Anglophone Committee's or the Francophone Committee's strategic plan are effective means of development for the communities. | 4 | 6 | 21 | 57 | 3.49 | 5 |
| Question 4. The communities and the economic development stakeholders in my region, province or territory are consulted when CEDEC or RDÉE members are selected. | 8 | 13 | 22 | 31 | 3.03 | 19 |

### Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire by all Respondents

| | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 | | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUESTIONS | Completely disagree | Partly disagree | Partly agree | Completely agree | AVERAGE | Non applicable |
| Question 5. The Support Fund funding application eligibility criteria are appropriate and will contribute to economic development leading eventually to job creation. | 4 | 2 | 31 | 41 | 3.40 | 15 |
| Question 6. The Support Fund has led federal institutions to adapt their policies, programs and services to the economic development and employability needs of the Official Language Minority Communities. | 7 | 14 | 38 | 21 | 2.91 | 13 |
| Question 7. The CEDEC or RDÉE in my region has the ability, resources and skills it needs to help the community develop its capacity, hence to carry out its mandate under the contribution agreement funded by the Support Fund. | 8 | 9 | 36 | 36 | 3.12 | 4 |
| Question 8. The CEDEC or RDÉE has a good understanding of my region's economic development and employability needs. | 5 | 12 | 31 | 41 | 3.21 | 4 |
| Question 9. The CEDEC or RDÉE has successfully brought together the key economic organizations in my region, province or territory around a common vision of what should constitute an economic development and employability plan. | 13 | 11 | 28 | 30 | 2.91 | 11 |
| Question 10. The Support Fund has led or will lead to progress in economic development and employability that would not have been possible otherwise. | 4 | 6 | 27 | 51 | 3.42 | 5 |
| Question 11. The Support Fund has helped strengthen the CEDEC or RDÉEs' ability to support the economic development and employability of the Official Language Minority Communities in my region, province or territory. | 7 | 6 | 23 | 50 | 3.35 | 7 |

## Chart of Results of Responses to the Written Questionnaire by all Respondents

| | A=1 | B=2 | C=3 | D=4 | | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **QUESTIONS** | **Completely disagree** | **Partly disagree** | **Partly agree** | **Completely agree** | **AVERAGE** | **Non applicable** |
| Question 12. The Support Fund has made it possible to complete or to strengthen the economic development organizations and institutions of the Official Language Minority Communities. | 6 | 10 | 30 | 38 | 3.19 | 9 |
| Question 13. I am satisfied with the activities of the CEDEC or the RDÉE and with the services it provides under the Support Fund. | 11 | 10 | 28 | 38 | 3.07 | 6 |

# *Appendix F*

## *Description of the Support Fund Mandate for HRSDC's Two National Committees for Human Resources Development*

## Description

### *Objectives:*

Through the Labour Market Partnerships (LMP), Human Resources Development Canada (HRSDC) will work closely with the Francophone Committee and the Anglophone Committee to enable them to implement their strategic planning to foster economic development, employability and community capacity building of Canada's linguistic minority communities. The Support Fund complements existing program funds at HRSDC and other federal departments.

### *Funding proposals should:*

- meet the economic needs of the Anglophone and Francophone Official Language Minority Communities in the four priority sectors identified: in the case of the Francophone Committee, the knowledge-based economy, rural development, tourism and integration of youth in economic development; and in the case of the Anglophone Committee, communications, community capacity building, youth, and job creation and economic diversification;
- have a visible and economic impact on job creation and economic diversification in the community;
- aim to achieve quantifiable objectives and measurable results, and to ensure a transfer of knowledge and skills in the sectors in which they are successful;
- take into account the missions (community and government) of the Francophone Committee and the Anglophone Committee and make use of sustainable partnerships in the public or private sector;
- show the means used to consult with communities;
- demonstrate the ability to carry out the activities; and
- clearly indicate the project's objectives, activities, partnerships, community consultations, expected results, duration, estimated costs, and cash forecasts.

### *Organizations eligible for funding:*

- Community sides – the Francophone Committee and the Anglophone Committee;
- Regroupements de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉEs) or their delegated organization.

### *Financial assistance:*

Funding will be provided under contribution agreements to cover overhead, including:

- salaries and costs related to the employment of personnel;
- professional fees;
- the cost of research work or technical studies;
- the cost of travel, equipment or facilities lease, and the costs related to implementation of strategic planning

# *Appendix G*
## *History and Evolution of the Support Fund*

In order to fully understand the mandate and implementation of the Support Fund, it is important to recall its history. Below is a summary of the history and evolution of the Support Fund.

**History and Evolution of the Support Fund**

| Date | Event |
|---|---|
| April 1993 | The National Economic Summit organized by the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA) and the Conseil canadien de la coopération recommended the creation of a national committee to analyse the issue of workforce training within Francophone and Acadian communities. |
| November 1993 | Creation, under the auspices of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne and the Conseil canadien de la coopération, of the *Comité d'adaptation des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne* (CARHFC), the predecessor organization to the Francophone Committee; financial support from HRSDC through sector partnerships. |
| June 16, 1995 | Publication by CARHFC of the *Plan directeur de l'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre de la francophonie canadienne*. |
| Spring 1996 | Adoption of the federal *Employment Insurance Act*, S.C. 1996, providing for the devolution of workforce training to the provinces through labour market development agreements (several of these agreements were signed between late 1996 and 1998), which signalled the withdrawal of HRSDC from the training field and resulted in the change in direction by the National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development (Francophone Committee) to economic development and employability. The 1995 master plan had already come out in support of economic development. At the time, there was already discussion around the inability to develop human resources without an environment conducive to economic development. |
| 1996 | First national economic forum is held in the Beauce, bringing together business people, Francophone community leaders, representatives of federal institutions and Quebec economic stakeholders to define the issue of economic development for Francophone and Acadian communities, examine various development models, and identify the key avenues for solutions. |
| December 13, 1996 | Signing of the first memorandum of understanding between HRSDC and the FCFA to create the Francophone Committee. |
| February 25 and 26, 1997 | First meeting of the Francophone Committee. |
| August 1997 | Start of negotiations on a memorandum of understanding linking the Francophone Committee, HRSDC and seven federal institutions. |

**History and Evolution of the Support Fund**

| Date | Event |
|---|---|
| 1997 to present | Beginning in 1997, federal/provincial/community memoranda of understanding signed in various provinces; in some cases, these are general development agreements.<br>Prince Edward Island June 1997<br>Alberta March 1999<br>Manitoba March 1999<br>In future, these may be sector agreements, focusing on such areas as tourism, etc. |
| February 1998 | Second national economic forum is held in Winnipeg, bringing together business people and Francophone and Acadian community leaders to more clearly define the issue of the economic development of Francophone and Acadian communities and to consult on the main avenues for action, including priority sectors for intervention and the creation or strengthening of provincial economic development and employability organizations. |
| March 20, 1998 | Signing of the second memorandum of understanding of the National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development; this memorandum binds the community side of the Francophone Committee and nine federal institutions (the seven original institutions and two additional ones). |
| Spring 1998 | Redesign by Western Economic Diversification of its support program for the economic development of Francophone communities, including the creation and/or basic funding of a Francophone economic organization in each province, which later added the RDÉE function to their activities. |
| May 29, 1998 | Creation of the National Human Resources Development Committee for the English Linguistic Minority (Anglophone Committee), creation of government and community tables and the signing of the first memorandum of understanding. |
| Fall 1998 | Launching of the first RDÉEs by their respective delegated organizations. |
| November 1998-November 1999 | Consultations, definition and validation of a strategic plan for the Francophone Committee, collaboration with the key community stakeholders across the country and the key government stakeholders; the strategic plan is used as the cornerstone and rationale for the creation of the Support Fund. |
| June 1999 | Third national economic forum is held in Bathurst, bringing together business people and Francophone and Acadian community leaders to confirm the Francophone Committee's strategic direction and to strengthen networking and links among economic stakeholders, businesspersons and the Support Fund. |
| June 12, 1999 | Announcement of the creation of the Support Fund by the Minister of HRSDC, the Honourable Pierre Pettigrew, at the Francophone Committee's national economic forum. |
| November 3, 1999 | Creation of four joint sector tables (community/departmental) responsible for providing the framework for developing the strategic plans for the Francophone Committee's four priority sectors. |
| November 1999 to November 2000 | Consultation and articulation of the strategic plans for the Francophone Committee's four priority sectors. Tabling and adoption of the strategic plans for the four sectors at the Francophone Committee's meeting in October 2000. |

**History and Evolution of the Support Fund**

| Date | Event |
|---|---|
| Fall 1999 | Start of the organization of the CEDECs in the Anglophone community in Quebec. |
| Fall 1999 | The Anglophone Committee approves the document entitled *"Community Economic Development Perspectives: Needs Assessment Report of the Diverse English Linguistic Minority Communities Across Quebec."* The document includes the vision of the Anglophone Minority Communities in Quebec. |
| February 2000 | The Anglophone Committee approves its Strategic Plan. |
| April 2000 | Tabling of the first evaluation of the National Human Resources Development Committee for the English Linguistic Minority (Anglophone Committee). |
| May 2000 | The Anglophone Committee adopts its vision and mandate. |
| May 2000 | Official launching of the document entitled *"Community Economic Development Perspectives: Needs Assessment Report of the Diverse English Linguistic Minority Communities Across Quebec."* The document is based on the findings of the study conducted in 1999. |
| May 16, 2000 | Appearance of the Francophone Committee and HRSDC before the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages. |
| May 2000 | Implementation of the first joint working group (community capacity) in Quebec. |
| June 2000 | Tabling of the first third-party evaluation of the Francophone Committee. |
| March 2001 | First Lauriers de la PME Awards Gala of the Francophone Committee showcasing the finalists and the successes of Francophone businesses working in one of the Francophone Committee's four priority sectors. |
| May 2001 | Tabling of the second third-party evaluation of the Anglophone Committee. |
| October 2001 | Tabling of the second third-party evaluation of the Francophone Committee. |
| September 2001 | Launching by the Francophone Committee of the inter-sector collaboration strategy involving biannual meetings of the RDÉE officers responsible for each of the four priority sectors, a strategy that is supported by the Gazel team. |
| September 2001 | Launching of three other working groups relating to the Anglophone Committee's strategic priorities (youth, communications and economic diversification/job creation). |
| November 2001 | Launching and implementation of the Francophone Committee's four sector action plans. |
| December 2001 | Launching by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, with the support of the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official Language Communities program of Canadian Heritage, of the Agricultural Rural Minority Language Community Planning Initiative, aimed at developing a vision and community economic development plan by and for rural Official Language Minority Communities. |
| March 19, 2002 | Announcement of the two-year extension of the Support Fund by the HRSDC Minister, the Honourable Jane Stewart. |
| March 20, 2002 | Tabling of the Francophone Committee's fourth annual report. |
| May 28, 2002 | Signing of the second memorandum of understanding setting the mandate of the Anglophone Committee and linking the efforts of this organization with those of six federal institutions. |

# *Appendix H*

## *Protocol 3 – Interview Protocol for RDÉE Managers*

1. What is your overall assessment of the structure and the operation of the Support Fund to January 31, 2002? What are its main strengths? What are its main weaknesses? In your opinion, what are its objectives?

2. Describe the organizational structure of your delegated organization, particularly the structure surrounding the RDÉE.

3. Did you consult with the communities in your region, province or territory in order to assess their needs, particularly concerning the National Committee's four strategic priorities? Does the Support Fund allow the RDÉE to do a better job of addressing the economic development and employability needs of the Francophone communities in your province or territory?

4. Has the Support Fund made it possible to identify more effectively the skills, knowledge and abilities of the labour force in your region? If so, what use are you making of this information? Please give a few examples of success stories. What additional research would allow the communities to better focus their efforts and craft their activities to speed their economic development and employability?

5. Has the Support Fund led to the formation of significant new partnerships? If so, which partnerships? If not, why not? How extensive is these partnerships' leverage effect, both financially and in terms of mobilizing and ensuring collaboration between the resources of actual and potential contributors to economic development and employability? Are the levels and types of new partnerships appropriate and adequate for achieving the Part VII objectives of economic development and employability?

6. Has the Support Fund led to progress that would not have been possible otherwise? If so, what progress, and how? If not, why not? Would you be able to respect your obligations and carry on your activities without the Support Fund? Are there needs that cannot be met by either the Support Fund or any other program?

7. Do the activities of the Support Fund *(contribution agreement delivery and management, networking, promotion and communication, and research)* allow it to achieve its objectives? Are these activities carried out adequately? What improvements, if any, would be desirable?

8. In your opinion, are the RDÉEs adequately equipped, experienced and suited to perform their duties under the contribution agreements? Is your RDÉE adequately equipped, experienced and suited to perform its duties? Are you receiving the levels and types of support you need from the SOLMC and the Francophone Committee?

9. Describe your experience in obtaining access to the Support Fund and your experience, if any, in implementing your contribution agreement. Is the Support Fund well structured? Are you receiving the full benefits from it? Describe your level of satisfaction with the services delivered by the program. Have some of your funding applications been turned down or referred to other sources of funding? Do you feel that access to the Support Fund in your region should be limited to the RDÉE?

10. Were the communities in your province or territory informed, sought out, and targeted for participation in the process of setting up the RDÉE? Are any major provincial community economic development and employability organizations not members of the RDÉE?

11. Identify the concrete results achieved in the following areas under the completed contribution agreements:
    - workforce and skills development;
    - economic development or diversification;
    - local decision-making and economic priority-setting;
    - promotion of business opportunities;
    - motivation of communities and enhancement of their desire to participate in this process;
    - diversification of funding sources for communities.

12. Has the Support Fund allowed the economic stakeholders in your province or territory to diversify their sources of funding and create new partnerships?

13. Has the Support Fund generated a change in the communities' mentality? Has the Support Fund helped the communities to work together and to share success stories?

14. In your province or territory, what are the strengths and weaknesses of your community in terms of economic development and employability? Does the community in your region, province or territory have the groups and organizations it needs to generate its own economic development and employability? Does it have a critical mass of resources and expertise in economic development and employability?

15. In your opinion, should the Support Fund be continued? Why? To what extent does the Support Fund contribute adequately and appropriately to achieving the two objectives under Section 41 of Part VII? Does the Support Fund make it possible to complete or strengthen the OLMCs' networks of associations and institutions? How can the Support Fund best continue to assist the communities with enhancing their vitality and development?

16. What is your assessment of Gazel as a communication tool and of its contribution to the economic development and employability of the communities?

# *Appendix I*

## *Distribution of Respondents to the Written Questionnaire*

The information below shows the distribution of the 158 persons initially targeted for the written questionnaire. In the end, the written questionnaire was sent to 153 potential respondents because 5 of the originally targeted respondents had left this field of activity.

| Category A:<br>RDÉE community members | |
|---|---|
| **Province/territory** | **Number** |
| British Columbia | 7 |
| Alberta | 3 |
| Saskatchewan | 6 |
| Manitoba | 12 |
| Ontario | 16 |
| New Brunswick | 10 |
| Nova Scotia | 5 |
| Prince Edward Island | 4 |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 5 |
| Nunavut | 2 |
| Northwest Territories | 2 |
| Yukon | 5 |
| ***Sub-total*** | ***77*** |

| Category B:<br>Respondents from the Anglophone minority community in Quebec | |
|---|---|
| **Subcategory** | **Number** |
| CEDEC Chairs | 3 |
| REDOs | 4 |
| Senior provincial coordinator | 1 |
| Anglophone community groups | 7 |
| ***Sub-total*** | ***15*** |

| Category C:<br>RDÉE partners | |
|---|---|
| **Province/territory** | **Number** |
| British Columbia | 7 |
| Alberta | 4 |
| Saskatchewan | 6 |
| Manitoba | 9 |
| Ontario | 11 |
| New Brunswick | 8 |
| Nova Scotia | 7 |
| Prince Edward Island | 5 |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 5 |
| Nunavut | 2 |
| Northwest Territories | |
| Yukon | 2 |
| ***Sub-total*** | ***66*** |
| **Cumulative total** | **158** |

### Exhibit I-1
Response Rates to the Written Questionnaire

| Response Rates | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | RDÉE Members | RDÉE Partners | Anglophone Minority Community | Total |
| Response Rate | 78% | 68% | 93% | 75% |
| Active Participation Rate | 63% | 55% | 80% | 61% |

# *Appendix J*

## *List of Regroupements de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉEs) and their corresponding delegated organizations*

In order to make it easier to identify the RDÉEs, the right-hand column of the table below gives the name of the organization mandated to establish the RDÉE in each province.

| RDÉE | Delegated Organization |
|---|---|
| Nunavut RDÉE | Association des francophones du Nunavut |
| Northwest Territories RDÉE | Fédération franco-téNOise |
| Yukon RDÉE | Association franco-yukonnaise |
| British Columbia RDÉE | Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique |
| Alberta RDÉE | Chambre économique de l'Alberta |
| Saskatchewan RDÉE | Conseil de la coopération de la Saskatchewan |
| Manitoba RDÉE | Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities |
| Ontario RDÉE (Given its population and the size of its territory, Ontario was assigned three sub-RDÉEs: Northern Ontario, Eastern Ontario and Southern Ontario, under the coordination of the Ontario RDÉE). | Ontario RDÉE (Initially, the Chambre économique de l'Ontario served as the RDÉE. However, in October 2001, the Ontario RDÉE was constituted as a non-profit organization). |
| New Brunswick RDÉE | Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick |
| Nova Scotia RDÉE | Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (RDÉE constituted as a non-profit organization) |
| Prince Edward Island RDÉE | Société de développement de la Baie acadienne |
| Newfoundland and Labrador RDÉE | Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador |

# Appendix K

## Description of the Main Organizations and Concepts

In order to provide a context for the evaluation report and to make reading the report easier, the reader has been provided with a description of the following key concepts, designations and expressions. They cover the main elements of the Support Fund environment.

***Secretariat, Official Language Minority Communities (SOLMC), of HRSDC:*** The SOLMC coordinates implementation of section 41 of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* for the entire Department. More specifically, and relevant to this evaluation, the SOLMC manages the Support Fund and is involved in determining the policies that govern this partnership with the National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development (Francophone Committee) and the National Human Resources Development Committee for the English Linguistic Minority (Anglophone Committee).

***National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development (Francophone Committee):*** The Francophone Committee is a joint national committee comprised of nine representatives from the federal institutions that signed the memorandum of agreement and nine representatives from Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities. The mission of this national committee, established under the terms of an initial memorandum of agreement signed on December 13, 1996 and a second one signed on March 20, 1998, is to foster economic and human resources development within Canada's Francophone and Acadian Communities.

***National Human Resources Development Committee for the English Linguistic Minority (Anglophone Committee):*** The Anglophone Committee is a cooperation mechanism overseeing activities to enhance the vitality of minority Anglophone communities in Quebec and to support their development in the areas of human resources and economic development. Established under the terms of an initial memorandum of agreement signed on May 29, 1998 and a second one signed on May 28, 2002, this committee unites the efforts of the six federal institutions[59] that signed the memorandum of agreement and representatives of the Anglophone minority community.

***Community side of the Francophone Committee:*** The community side brings together the 9 representatives of the Francophone and Acadian communities, including three representatives from each of the three regions: West, Central and Ontario. It acts as a delegated organization of the Support Fund, develops and implements the Francophone Committee's strategic plan, and provides support to the RDÉEs. It has a secretariat to assist it in carrying out its responsibilities.

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[59] The participation of the six federal institutions is very recent, having begun only on May 28, 2002. HRSDC was the only one of these institutions to have been involved with the NHRSDCELM during the period covered by this evaluation.

***Community side of the Anglophone Committee:*** The community side is composed of representatives from regional organizations of the Anglophone minority community and the eight CEDECs. It acts as a delegated organization of the Support Fund, develops and implements the Anglophone Committee strategic plan, and provides financial, administrative and functional support to the CEDECs. It has a secretariat to assist it in carrying out its responsibilities.

***Memoranda of understanding:*** Each of the two national committees, namely, the Francophone Committee and the Anglophone Committee, is governed by a memorandum of understanding that defines the committee's mandate and the roles and responsibilities of the various signatories, both federal institutions and community representatives. The memorandum also sets out the main operational modalities. The Francophone Committee's first memorandum of understanding was signed in 1996 and the second in 1998. The Anglophone Committee's first memorandum of understanding was signed in 1998 and the second in 2002.

***Francophone Committee's four priorities:*** This national committee has identified four priority sectors: the knowledge-based economy, rural development, tourism and integration of youth in economic development. It has developed and is presently implementing strategic plans.

***Anglophone Committee's four priorities:*** This national committee has identified four strategic priorities: communications, community capacity building, youth and job creation and economic diversification.

***Delegated organizations:*** Delegated organizations are organizations authorized to submit applications for funding and enter into contribution agreements under the Support Fund. There are presently 14 delegated organizations: 12 RDÉEs, the Francophone Committee and the Anglophone Committee.

***Contribution agreements:*** The SOLMC enters into contribution agreements with the delegated organizations to achieve the Support Fund's objectives and to implement the strategic plans of the two national committees.

***Regroupements de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE):*** The 12 RDÉEs (one for each province and territory with a Francophone minority community) are responsible for achieving the Support Fund's objectives by carrying out the contribution agreements. Each of these RDÉEs is operated by a delegated organization or is constituted as a non-profit organization.[60]

***Community Economic Development and Employability Committee (CEDEC):*** Eight CEDECs have been created throughout Quebec and work to motivate Anglophone minority communities in the areas of community capacity building and community economic development. The CEDECs are not delegated organizations under the Support Fund but are provided with resources through the Anglophone Committee.

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[60] See Appendix I for the list of RDÉEs and corresponding delegated organizations.

***Regional Economic Development Officer (REDO):*** Each CEDEC has access to a REDO who provides the necessary assistance to support its community capacity building work and to maintain organizational ties with the community table secretariat.

***Employment Benefits and Support Measures (EBSM):*** Under the *Employment Insurance Act*, the objective of the Employment Benefits and Support Measures is to assist individuals to prepare for, obtain and maintain employment, resulting in savings to the Employment Insurance Account. The Support Fund is subject to the terms and conditions of this HRSDC program.

***Labour Market Partnerships (LMP):*** The LMP are partnerships with third parties entered into under the EBSM. The Support Fund is an LMP.

***Finding:*** The result of an investigation (Source: *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th Edition).

***Conclusion:*** A reasoned deduction or inference; the last main division of a discourse, usually containing a summing up of the points and a statement of opinion or decision reached (Source: *Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*).

# Appendix L
## List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations and their corresponding titles or expressions are provided in the table below.

| Abbreviations | Titles |
|---|---|
| ACOA | Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency |
| Anglophone Committee | National Human Resources Development Committee for the English Linguistic Minority |
| CARHFC | Comité d'adaptation des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne |
| CEDEC | Community Economic Development and Employability Committee |
| EBSM | Employment Benefits and Support Measures |
| Francophone Committee | National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development |
| HRSDC | Human Resources and Skills Development Canada |
| LMP | Labour Market Partnerships |
| RDÉE | Regroupements de développement économique et d'employabilité |
| REDO | Regional Economic Development Officer |
| SOLMC | Secretariat, Official Language Minority Communities |
| WED | Western Economic Diversification Canada |